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ELLEN MAY WOODWARD.

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OF

ELLEN MAY WOODWARD.

BY THE

REV. GEO. D. MILES, A.M.,
RECTOR OF ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH, WILKES-BARRÈ, PA.

PHILADELPHIA:
LINDSAY AND BLAKISTON.
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TO THE

CHILDREN OF ST. STEPHEN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL,

WILKES-BARRÈ, PENNSYLVANIA,

THIS LITTLE NARRATIVE

OF ONE OF THEIR OWN NUMBER,

TAKEN FROM AMONG THEM BY A SUDDEN DEATH,

AND TRANSFERRED

TO HER HOME IN HEAVEN, IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

BY THEIR FRIEND AND PASTOR.

INTRODUCTION.

On Saturday morning, January 19th, 1850, an accident occurred in the vicinity of Wilkesbarrè, Pennsylvania, which filled the whole community with the deepest sorrow, and awakened an extensive sympathy wherever it became known. Three young ladies starting out with others from the house of Hon. George W. Woodward, fell through the ice formed over the flats near the Susquehanna River, and were drowned. One of these, Ellen May Woodward, aged thirteen years and five months, the subject of the following narrative, was Judge Woodward's eldest daughter. The others were Miss Mary R. Benner, aged seventeen, from Bellefonte, Centre County, a visiter

at his house, and Miss Ann O. Butler, aged twenty-one, a member of his family. The peculiar position of Ellen Woodward as a member of the church of Christ at so early an age, and the manifestations of deep piety which marked her, will account for the appearance of this little volume. She was one of Christ's lambs, committed to the care of the pastor of the flock, and her story is told to lead others into the same fold.

Wilkes-barrè, July 1st, 1850.

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MEMOIR.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY CHILDHOOD.

Ellen May Woodward, the daughter of the Hon. George W. and Sarah Elizabeth Woodward, was born in Wilkesbarre, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, on the 26th of June, 1836, and was baptized by the Rev. Dr. May, in St. Stephen's Church, on Sunday, December 22d, of the same year. During her earliest childhood she was never considered as peculiarly amiable in her disposition, or more disposed than children in general towards religious impressions; on the contrary, there were instances where the reverse of this might be observed, and where,

without being regarded as a *bad* child, in the common acceptation of the term, she yet exhibited much of that self-will so early observed in the natural heart. She was familiar, however, with the constant exercises of religion from her earliest youth, and as she grew up, her disposition becoming modified by the surrounding influences, she manifested a better spirit, and showed a more than ordinary interest in religious exercises. These traits of character, and the change which was observable in her, have been more and more a matter of reflection to those who had any part to perform in the work of her moral culture. She was early noticed by her teacher in the infant school, and by her pastor as she grew into childhood, as one whom it was always pleasant to see, and with whom was associated little of that faultiness which so often gives the teacher and the pastor pain. In her countenance there could always be seen the earnest desire to learn the truths appropriate to the day and place; a countenance which even then might seem indicative of the work of grace, which was so soon to be

manifested. In saying this, there is no desire on the part of any who are interested in her brief history, to represent her as a precocious child. In all that is to follow, it is our only aim to present her truly as she was, with no attempt to hold her up as a *model child*, for such she was not; and nothing could have more distressed her heart, so sensitively alive to her own defects, than the idea of being made an example for the imitation of others. It is the work of God's grace in her heart which we truly wish to honour, and our desire is to present her to her young companions, and all who may read this simple narrative, just as she appeared to her living friends, only with this natural difference,—that we look upon every blessing when it has departed, in another light, and reason more truly in regard to it, than we do when we have its full enjoyment. "How blessings brighten as they take their flight!" Could her young companions enjoy her society now, just as she was when with them before her death, how differently would they appreciate her. They would mark those traits which

then were hardly noticed, but which, while unnoticed, led all who became intimate with her to love her. There was a charm of which all seemed to feel the influence, yet of which none were fully aware.

The qualities which seemed most to strike the minds of her teachers were her great modesty and perfect transparency of character, her unexampled truthfulness and sincerity. She seemed hardly to realize what deception is. Her teachers were often restrained from bestowing upon her the meed of praise which they thought justly her due, from the positive annoyance which it seemed to give her, in her total unconsciousness of its desert. With this trait in her character was joined that self-possession which is always the accompaniment of true modesty. In her perfect simplicity and unaffectedness, she would freely converse with any of the many visiters at her father's house; while they, in turn, would be regarding her with an admiration at which she would have been not a little surprised. While always of a serious turn, none seemed to enjoy life more than she did. None would enter more

heartily into the innocent sports of childhood with her young companions, and, with the exception of the few weeks in which her heart was all absorbed in the settlement of the great question of her soul's safety, no child appeared to have a more uniformly happy life. All her outward circumstances were favourable to this result, and her own inward spirit would have moulded a less favourable worldly lot into a condition of contentment.

It is difficult to tell the precise time when she first began to feel an interest in the subject of religion; and more difficult still to fix the hour, the day, or the month, when that great change, the new birth, took place. But on this point we have no trouble. It is of far less consequence to know the *time*, than to know the *fact* that it did take place. That there are persons who can fix that time with some good degree of assurance, we do not doubt, but it seems not the manner in which God's spirit *generally* operates. The soul is more often led by a way which it knows not, by steps which it cannot see, until, from the native condition of midnight darkness, it is

brought out into the clear sunlight of Christian truth, and, looking back upon his former condition with a full realization of the great change through which he has passed, the new man in Christ Jesus can say, "Whereas I *was blind, now I see.*" This is in full accordance with what our Saviour said to Nicodemus: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Holding this to be the *general* mode in which conversion takes place, we do not look for any precise moment in which the subject of this memoir passed through that great change: nor do we have less confidence in the reality of her conversion, because we cannot point to the time. The *time* of it is with God: the *fact* alone are we concerned with, and that fact we are to judge of by the life and fruits.

We have already said, that in her earliest childhood, Ellen did not manifest a remarkably amiable disposition, but rather the reverse. There was one trait, however, which

was conspicuous from the beginning,—and that was her great love for her mother, a love which amounted to an entire devotedness, an affection accompanied with such strong yearnings, that she could hardly tolerate even a short separation. Whether parting from her mother at night, or to go on an errand, or to school, a kiss and adieu, multiplied and affectionate, were her established habits; and her first care on returning was to assure herself of the welfare of her mother. With the sincerest affection for every member of the family, her love for her mother seemed from very early childhood to the day of her death to be the absorbing passion of her nature. Nor was she wanting in love and obedience to her aged maternal grandmother, who had always been a member of the family. This revered relative was often ill, and many, many times has Ellen foregone the recreations in which the other children were engaged, to sit for hours by her bedside, reading to her in the Bible or some other good book.

Early in life instances were noticed where

Ellen took great interest in the study of the Bible, and it could be seen by her questions, that she was generally far in advance of children of her age, in the knowledge of God's truth. Since her death many conversations on this subject have recurred to her parents of a deeply interesting character, some of which must have taken place when she was not more than eight or nine years of age. She, however, in her own religious experience, does not seem to have referred to any of this early instruction, or their early impressions, as having anything to do with her Christian character as afterwards developed. But notwithstanding her own unconsciousness of it, the way had been prepared by steps which she did not recognise. There still seemed to be needed some striking event, or some definite presentation of truth, to draw forth her affection, and bring her mind to an intelligent decision; and such an occasion or event was not long wanting, but was furnished in God's own good time.

CHAPTER II.

THE AWAKENING.

On the last Sunday in July, 1848, after catechising the children of the Sunday school in St. Stephen's Church, the rector read to them the narrative of "Little Elizabeth." This story proved very deeply interesting to Ellen, and made an impression upon her heart, more definite than any one thing before known in her religious history. The narrative was brief, and gave the few and simple incidents in the life of a little child who died before she was four years of age. In that life, however, short as it was, there was witnessed as clear evidence of a work of grace, as is witnessed in the case of any person of maturer years. Penitence for sin, faith in Christ, and gratitude to God for all

his goodness, were distinctly developed. Her natural temper, though hasty and unruly, as early exhibited, was clearly conquered by divine grace, and the missionary spirit, the true spirit of Christ's disciples, was seen to such an extent, that she wished to sell the trinkets and jewels which were presented by her friends, and devote the money to the heathen. This narrative was sent in manuscript from England to the Rev. Dr. Cutler, Rector of St. Ann's Church, Brooklyn, who had it printed and distributed to all the children of the Sunday school connected with that church. The present writer well remembers the day, while assistant minister in that church, when the distribution of these little books took place. He then reserved a copy, which he read at the time before mentioned, in the parish to which he had removed. Having heard this story, Ellen returned home, and gave a most particular account of it to her mother and to her younger sister, who was not at school. Her heart seemed deeply moved, she shed many tears over its recital; her whole soul was agi-

tated with the great question of her own salvation, and with characteristic affection and earnestness, asked her mother to pray for her.

If we could have looked into the workings of Ellen's heart at this time, it would have probably appeared, that a new and deeper conviction of the truth had fastened upon her mind that early piety was possible. There can be no doubt that the many lessons which she had received at home, and in the Sunday school, and at church, had produced their wonted impression in some degree. We have already said that it will be difficult to designate the moment when she became a Christian. The ground had been preparing through her infancy and childhood. That same depravity which is the inheritance of all by nature, belonged to her, and the same great work of the Spirit was needed, before she could enter heaven. The work was most gradually developed according to our Saviour's analogy in the parable of the sower. The ground must first be prepared or made good. It was not so originally, or by nature. And when the

ground was prepared, the seed must be sown. This would not spring up and come to maturity at once. The full ear of ripened grain would be as unnatural a sight when immediately produced, as would be the full-grown and experienced Christian starting up from the death of sin and worldliness. The seed must *begin* to grow, after it had been planted in the prepared ground. It would then start and grow before its first beginnings could be seen; before it appeared above the surface. Then would come the blade, the first faint signs of life, and returning spring-time. In this early tenderness it might be easily crushed and destroyed, but if guarded with care, as the husbandman watches his growing vegetation, it would increase, and, under the blessing of God's sun and rain, under the refreshing influence of the sun of righteousness, and the dews of God's Spirit, the tender blade would soon expand into the forming ear.

Such seems to have been the time in Ellen's moral history, when this little narrative was read. It presented religion to her in a new and more defined aspect. It coincided with

all the instruction she had previously received, and went beyond it in this,—that it furnished a tangible case, in which the possible was developed into the actual; the theory became practice. Nor will it be sufficient to speak of this as a *natural* result. It was more than this. It seemed to be one of the means among the many which the Holy Spirit uses to lead the heart of a child to the Saviour. It was something that she could understand and appreciate. She saw a little child of less than four years giving evident marks of piety, and dying happy. Why might not the same thing be true in her case? If so young a child should feel so strong a sense of sin, why should not she? If an infant could feel love to Jesus Christ for saving her soul, why should not her heart be touched with the same love? And thus God made use of one of those means, so small as to be despised by worldly wisdom, to bring another child to her heavenly Father. Christ himself had said while on earth, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven:" and he also said, "Verily, verily, I

say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein." Thus did God's work seem to be accomplishing in Ellen's heart, by those apparently humble means which the Spirit would more readily bless.

It was not long after the reading of the narrative of Little Elizabeth, and the impression as above supposed proceeding from it, that Ellen's mother informed her pastor of her interest in serious things. She had even mentioned to her mother her desire to speak with me upon the subject. The particular trains of conversation on that and other subsequent occasions, are not distinctly remembered; but they left an abiding impression upon my own mind that a work of grace had been commenced, and had even then proceeded so far, that I should have had no hesitation in admitting her as a candidate for the rite of confirmation, and thereupon to full communion with the church. The matter was hinted to her then, as a thing to be considered carefully and solemnly, as the Bishop was expected to visit the parish the last of that same

month. It was left, however, to her own feelings; and she, with that humility and diffidence so often discoverable, soon expressed the opinion that she was too young, and that it would be better to postpone it for the present. She was now about twelve years of age, and though she gave an evidence far superior to that upon which many a Christian has asked and been allowed the privileges of the full covenant, it was well, as far as we can now see, that she should wait for a further development of Christian character. The coming year was to witness a far deeper experience, and a more active struggle to complete the begun work. Lovely and tender in spirit as she was, the great adversary of our race, who goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, would not relinquish his claim upon the lamb of the flock, till he had exerted his utmost power. That contest we shall soon be called to witness.

CHAPTER III.

ELLEN IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

We may as well speak here of Ellen's character and conduct in the Sunday school, as in any other place, though we may have to anticipate some things in that connexion, which happened later in her history. From the infant school to the Bible class, of which she was a member at the time of her death, she had always shown a similar, though increasing interest. Each teacher to whom she had at different times recited, speaks of her in the warmest terms, as a most exemplary scholar; and they all felt that they had one, at least, who would pay good attention and reward the labour bestowed upon the lesson. She came desiring to learn, was always prompt in answering, and always understood

her lesson. If a difficult question occurred which required more than usual thought and study, the teacher felt all confidence that it would meet with an answer from Ellen; and the readiness with which it was answered, was only equalled by the delicacy and modesty with which that answer was given. Nor was it alone the lesson of the school that occupied her attention. This was by no means the limit of her biblical study. There were times, indeed, when the family circle at home would be formed into a Bible class of a Sabbath afternoon, and when all the members would join in the delightful study of the sacred volume. Doubtless many a good impression was treasured up from this exercise. It was a sacred influence coming from the sanctuary of a happy home, where the father was the priest of his own household; and should the holy day be thus occupied, and the influence of home thus directed by every Christian family, there would be less complaint on the part of children that the day was dull and tedious, and less regrets on the part of parents, that the chil-

dren had departed from the path of virtue. "*Train* up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." It may be useful here to explain in a few words the manner in which this exercise had been conducted. It had long been the custom in her father's family, when he was at home and circumstances permitted, to gather the whole family together in this manner on Sunday afternoon, each one that was old enough to read being provided with a Bible, and the younger children seated to listen. Several chapters would then be read, parents and children reading successively two verses each, after which a familiar and general conversation would ensue on some striking passage or impressive truth that had been met with in the lesson. The main object in these exercises was to bring home the truth to the hearts and consciences of all present; and the articles and liturgy of the church, and the sermon of the morning were convenient illustrations, which were freely used for this purpose. In this exercise Ellen always manifested a lively and intelligent

interest. Her questions and observations indicated a degree of thoughtfulness far beyond her years.

But in addition to all the foregoing, there is evidence that she had her own plan for pursuing the study of the Bible, after her mind and heart had become so deeply interested in the personal application of its truths. Among her papers there was found a manuscript question book which she had written at times upon different portions of scripture, in addition to the lesson which she prepared for the Sunday school. These questions are such as would be most easily and naturally suggested to her mind, and sometimes are accompanied with reflections which were awakened by their study. The following are quoted as a specimen. It may be well to make a remark here, which will be applicable alike to these and other extracts from her papers. She wrote for no eye but her own. She seems to have poured out her heart on paper, the better to systematize her thoughts, and enable her to analyze them, and with no view whatever to the inspection of others.

This will account in some measure for the more broken and disjointed style of those of her papers that were peculiarly private, as compared with the letters which were designed for the perusal of others.

"QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE, WRITTEN WHEN I WAS TWELVE YEARS OLD.

Questions on the second chapter of Matthew.

"When Herod was dead, who appeared to Joseph? (v. 19.)

"What did the angel of the Lord say this time?

"Joseph was warned by an angel of the Lord in the first place in a dream, to flee into Egypt, and afterwards, when Herod was dead, the angel of the Lord appeared a second time in a dream, and told Joseph to flee into the land of Israel. I think that this shows the protecting power of God in enabling them to avoid Herod.

"Did Joseph obey the command?

"We see that Joseph did obey the command

of the angel of the Lord; and we ought to obey all the commands of the Bible as the revealed word of God.

"Who reigned after Herod?

"It seems that after the death of Herod Joseph was still afraid to go into Judea, as Archelaus his son reigned in his father Herod's place, and 'very likely Joseph was afraid that he had the same cruel disposition as his father.' He was further admonished of God to turn into the 'parts of Galilee.'"

It will be seen by the quotation marks here and elsewhere, how particularly scrupulous Ellen was to take nothing from others without an acknowledgment, though this little book was to be seen by no one but herself. Such was her character, manifested in everything.

Luke, 8th chapter, from the 22d to the 26th verse.

"It happened once that Jesus 'went into a ship with his disciples,' and he desired to go to the other side of the lake they were upon, so they 'launched forth.' But presently 'he fell asleep,' and while he slept a

great storm arose, and the ship filled with water. His disciples were very much frightened and went to him 'and awoke him saying, Master, Master, we perish.' But he rebuked the winds and the waves 'and there was a calm.' And he said, 'Where is your faith?' At this those that were with him were afraid and 'wondered' saying, 'What manner of man is this? for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.'"

"Sunday, July 29th, '49.

"Jesus once 'went into a city called Nain,' and he was followed by his disciples and a great multitude of people. When he came 'to the gate of the city,' he met a funeral.

There was a young man of the city to be buried, who was the only son of a widow. He 'touched the bier' with his hand, and those that carried it 'stood still.' Then he told the young man to arise. He who was lifeless but a moment before 'sat up' in his coffin, and Jesus 'delivered him to his mother.' Then all those that were about were seized with fear, and 'glorified God.' They

declared that 'there was a great prophet risen up among them, and God had visited his people.' 'The disciples of John,' told him all the things that had happened."

This is a specimen of the manner in which Ellen made the study of the Bible interesting to herself; seizing hold of incidents in the scripture narrative, and clothing them in her own language; sometimes transferring her own ideas of present customs, to that distant land, and that different scene. An instance of this is observed in the last extract, where the word "coffin" is introduced, a word not in the original, because that custom of burying was not common, but it would easily and naturally occur to the mind of a child who was thus writing, when she knew its use in her own country. The same may be observed in regard to the word "funeral." Should such an exercise as this be pursued generally in our Sunday schools, under the direction of ministers, superintendents, and teachers, it would greatly enhance the interest of the lessons, and familiarize the youthful

mind with the word of God. Where scripture scenes or truths are stated by the children themselves in language which they can comprehend, they must produce a greater effect, than the same things though often and carelessly read over in the ordinary course of instruction. Reflection is stimulated, and the habit of thoughtfully weighing the teaching of the Bible is confirmed. There is no doubt that Ellen gained great benefit from this exercise. She assumed it herself, and it was not a task but a delightful duty.

That she was truly conscientious in her attendance upon every duty has already been remarked. The following note is an instance. It was directed to her Sunday school teacher.

"Please excuse me for not being at your house in time to study over the lesson with you. It was very kind in you to go over with it for our sakes, and I was very thoughtless not to come down sooner."

She once spoke to me in church as I was passing through the aisle, after catechising the

children, and asked my forgiveness for whispering during the exercise. I had perceived nothing of the kind, but it made no difference with her; she knew it herself and was not easy until she had confessed it. Many a similar instance has occurred where she has asked the forgiveness of her teachers or parents for something which she had done in a thoughtless moment, when they were not at all aware of it. Things which were never noticed by others, were condemned by herself, so sensitively alive was she to the most trifling fault. On retiring for the night she always parted from her parents with a kiss, and generally with some expression of desire for their forgiveness of faults, which were so minute that they had not observed them, or had forgotten them, insomuch that they could not suspect to what she referred unless she explained. The most refined casuistry is not so severe as was her jealousy of herself.

CHAPTER IV.

EARNEST STRUGGLES.

During the winter and spring of 1849, but little change was observable in her religious character. There was the same attention to all her duties, at home, at the seminary, in the Sunday school, and at church. She seemed never to lose the interest which had been awakened during the preceding summer. But there yet appeared to be needed some deeper movings of the Holy Spirit to develope her religious affections and complete the work already begun. And this influence was not long absent. There was no outwardly exciting circumstance to impress her already awakened mind, but the still, small voice of God's Spirit bade her go forward in the path of duty. Her true character was yet to

be manifested under circumstances of strong spiritual conflict with the enemy. Her own native depravity was to be more deeply realized, and the preciousness of the Saviour experienced as it had not been before.

Some time in the latter part of May, or about the first of June, it was discoverable that her mind had become most deeply exercised. It was then that she seemed to enter more freely into conversation with her parents and her pastor. As the work went on it began to assume to her an agonizing interest. Satan was exerting his strongest influence to defeat the work of God, and the tender child was thrown almost into despair. Under the Spirit's promptings she searched her own heart very thoroughly, and watched its changing phases most narrowly. She took every pains to be informed. She opened her heart fully, and concealed nothing from her spiritual advisers. The progress of the work may be judged better by some of her own statements in her own simple language, than by a mere description. In conversation with her I noticed that her

impressions of her condition varied much from time to time; some days buoyed up with hope,—on others depressed with many fears. I then suggested to her the exercise of setting down her thoughts on paper,—writing in one column the *encouraging* thoughts,—in another, the *discouraging* thoughts. By this exercise she could keep in view the various changes of her mind, and, perhaps be led to judge more correctly after a little delay. This exercise her mind seized upon, and she pursued it very faithfully. The following is the first paper which I received from her, and it gives an idea of the thoroughness of the work which was going on in her heart.

"Saturday afternoon, June 9th, 1849.

"My dear Pastor:

"It seems as though I could tell you my feelings and thoughts better by writing about them to you in the form of a letter, than to arrange them more formally. I asked mother if she thought it would be disrespectful to you to write you in this way, rather than to write down my thoughts in the other

way that you proposed to me; and as I feel that my state of mind is not very different from what it was yesterday, and as there have not many new thoughts come into my mind, she seemed to think I might write in this way if I chose. I think there is one thing of which I am certain, and that is my very great hardness of heart; although I do not think I feel it as much just now as I did a little while ago, but I hope I did feel it very much. And would I feel this hardness of heart if the Holy Spirit had not showed it to me? I think in the conversation on last Monday you said it was not natural for us to feel that our hearts were hard. I believe you asked me last night if I did not know, or if I was not certain, that I would rather lose anything than my interest in Christ, or something to that effect. I hope when I consider the matter that I see it would be better to have a well-grounded hope in Christ than anything else. But oh that I *felt* it more! I would not be willing to go back to the world and lose even the hope that I have. But sometimes there is such a thought as this

passes through my mind,—do I really desire to be a Christian? But perhaps it is wrong to doubt that I have such a desire, and if I pray for such a desire, will I not receive it, even if I have it not? The possibility of being deceived has troubled me some. I think over my life since last summer, when, I trust, I began to think more seriously than I ever had done before of these things, and I will think that I have had some Christian experience. Then I think of my doubts for days past and ask, were these doubts temptations of the evil one? or were they intended to lead me to see that I had been deceived, and consequently prompted by the Holy Spirit? But will not God direct my mind to the truth, if I strive to put my trust in him? I believe I asked you on Monday if a Christian would sin intentionally, or something to that point, and you said that you would think that person in an exceedingly dangerous position, though you would not wish to limit the mercy of God; and I expect that troubled me some, though I hope now I have not committed such a sin. One thing

that I trust has comforted me some has been this passage of scripture—'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.' Would you advise me (I think you did) to keep a list of my different trains of thought day by day, if I live? May my Heavenly Father give me entire freedom from doubt in his own good time.

"From a poor little girl to her pastor."

This must appear to all who read it a remarkable letter, coming from a child twelve years of age. The feelings and workings of the human heart there indicated, have been experienced by many a Christian, and as they read this simple narrative, they will recognise more or less that great change through which they have all passed (if indeed they are Christians), as face answereth to face in a glass. Its only peculiarity is, that it appeared in the case of one so young; and even this shows the operation of the Holy Spirit, which can move alike the heart of the most gifted man in mature life, and the heart of a little child. There were faithful searchings described in that letter which no hypocrite or

deceiver would practise, and there was a closeness of reasoning upon doubtful exercises in her mind, which would honour a gifted philosopher or metaphysician. She seemed now to be needing encouragement and comfort, and therefore the following was immediately sent to her in answer to her letter, and under the blessing of that God who works by means, it was in some measure effectual in producing the desired result.

"My dear Ellen:

"I was glad that you felt a freedom in writing to me in the way you did, to tell me what was passing in your mind without any formality. I am directed in God's word to give every one his portion of meat in due season, and to feed the lambs of the flock as well as the sheep. I may not reach your case in my public ministrations, and therefore I sit down now to preach on paper, feeling assured that my sermon will be well received, and with the hope that I may assist one who is seeking the heavenward path. You doubtless did not intend to write in any particular

order, but to say what happened to occur most readily, and yet you have proceeded most systematically, if I may so speak. Let me refer to your several positions that you may review them again, and take courage.

"1. There is one thing of which you are certain, viz.: 'very great hardness of heart.' Who taught you this? From whence did the feeling arise? Did God's Spirit convince you of it, or did the devil come to you in the hours of your early and comparative innocence and prompt the feeling? This latter is not his method of dealing, and therefore it must have been God's Spirit, early in his visitings to your heart, before that heart grew more hard; and therefore you ought to thank him. Is not this in other words, your overwhelming sense of the burden of sin, and the strongly expressed desire of your soul to be relieved of it? But how will you be relieved? This is the next step. If we are sinners, we need salvation, and hence you are next looking to a hope in Christ.

"2. You say, 'I hope when I consider the matter that I see it would be better to have

a well-grounded hope in Christ, than anything else. But O that I *felt* it more!' Is not this, in your own modest language, the strongest way in which you could express the all-pervading desire of your heart, that you might have a well-grounded hope in Christ? And who gives you this desire? Is it the devil? Does he wish you to have *any* hope in Christ at all? And least of all, would he wish you to have a *well-grounded* hope? Be not faithless, but believe that the Holy Spirit alone could prompt in you such good desires, and desires so accordant with the written word. God's work and the devil's are not so much alike.

"3. What is the next step? Some faint dawnings of hope appear. 'I would not be willing to go back to the world and lose even the hope that I have.' This certainly is not 'hoping against hope,' to use a common expression, but it is hope in favour of more hope. It is the little germ of hope planted in your heart, bursting forth,—expanding and stretching out its tendrils like the growing vine, that it may feel a support stronger than

itself. Now whence this hope? Does the devil prompt it? Nay. He gives many dark and troublesome *doubts*, but he awakens no hopes. He would palsy and benumb the sensibilities, that we might not feel; or cast us into darkness and despair, but he would never quicken a hope. Hope is a stronger form of desire. It holds the intermediate position between desire and fruition. If we do not desire a thing, we shall not hope for it; and if we do not hope for it, we shall not enjoy it. But what is the object for which you hope? Is it good or bad? Is it in accordance with God's will, or not? Does he wish you to be saved or lost? From whom do 'all *holy desires*, all good counsel, and all just works proceed?' Perhaps I have been too particular in this discrimination, but I am persuaded that your mind will readily follow them. I am trying with the calm, unprejudiced, and disinterested eye of a looker-on, to lay open your own mind to yourself, and show you those landmarks and grounds of confidence, which you are too diffident to assume for yourself.

"4. But you have gone farther than this. You have gone through those preceding exercises of mind, and yet are sometimes tempted to ask, 'Do I really desire to be a Christian?' Look back through the period of the past year, and let your reigning and prevailing *motive* answer this question. Let the hours which you have spent in communion with God, when your heart has been laid open before Him answer. Let the hours when you have read his word and tried to apply to your own heart its various tests, answer. Let the chief happiness which you have enjoyed in that period, answer. *I* need not answer the question, for you yourself throw in a peradventure that it may be 'wrong to doubt that you have such a desire.'

"5. After throwing out these doubts, and expressing your trouble at 'the possibility of being deceived,' you do seem to honour the work and promptings of the Spirit. You review your life since last summer, when you began to think more seriously of religion, and you say, 'I will think that I have had some

Christian experience;' and you express the confidence that God will direct your mind to the truth, if you strive to put your trust in him. You also have some comfort under the spiritual chastisement which the Lord has laid upon you, and you seem to feel that he does love you, since he has chastened you, and that he will yet show you the light of his countenance, though clouds of doubt have sometimes veiled your clear view. May I not trust that this is the beginning of better days to you; an earnest of the good things which your heavenly Father has in store for you? May I not hope that you will follow on to know the Lord, forgetting the things behind; and that soon you will come out of your time of trial and conflict with your great spiritual enemy, a cheerful and happy child of God, through discipleship in Christ, letting the mild beams of your Christian light and life fall upon the circle in which you move, cheering the hearts of pious friends, and winning others by the lovely example of one who has been with Jesus! For this, your pastor will continue to pray, while in closing

he would put into your mouth the prayer of the humble penitent, 'Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief.'

"Your affectionate pastor.

"June 10th, 1849."

Soon after this, she handed me another paper, more in accordance with the plan I had suggested.

"List of the different thoughts that I have in regard to myself on the subject of religion, and some passages of scripture to sustain or not sustain these thoughts.

"ENCOURAGING THOUGHTS.

"A desire to be saved, and, I hope, a willingness to accept the way in which to be saved.

"I do not think that I would be willing to give up even the hope that I now have and be taken up by worldly pleasures.

"I should think that there would be great danger in giving up even the hope that I now have.

"It is said in the last verse of the 9th chapter of Luke's gospel, by Jesus Christ, 'no man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.'

"It must be the Holy Spirit that makes me think about my soul.

"My heavenly Father does not despise a troubled spirit.

"We have an assurance that our heavenly Father will hear and answer our prayers.

"In the 18th chapter of Luke, Jesus teaches that we ought always to pray, and not to faint and say:—'And shall not God avenge his own elect which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?'

"Father pointed out to me the verse that was read in the psalter this morning, 'The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, shalt thou not despise.' He said he thought of me when he read it, and it seems to me I noticed it myself.

"I think I have a troubled spirit."

"DISCOURAGING THOUGHTS.

"I think sometimes that the 181st hymn suits me exactly.

"The Lord will happiness divine
On contrite hearts bestow;
Then tell me, gracious God, is mine
A contrite heart, or no?

"I hear, but seem to hear in vain,
Insensible as steel,
If aught is felt, 'tis only pain
To find I cannot feel.

"My best desires are faint and few,
I fain would strive for more;
But when I cry, 'My strength renew,'
Seem weaker than before.

"I see thy saints with comfort filled,
When in thy house of prayer;
But still in bondage I am held,
And find no comfort there.

"O make this heart rejoice or ache,
Decide this doubt for me;
And if it be not broken, break;
And heal it if it be.

"I am afraid my friends seem to think

better of my state of mind than I can think of myself.

"There are some other discouraging thoughts, perhaps I had better talk to you about when I see you."

At another time she wrote the following:—

"List of the thoughts which I have with regard to myself on the subject of religion.

"ENCOURAGING THOUGHTS.

"Jesus said, 'Him who cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.'

"If I know my own mind to any degree, I think I wish to have Christ for my saviour, and to enjoy his love.

"The hope that I do sometimes feel some love to my Saviour, though my heart is often very cold.

"Would I care anything about my soul if God had not sent his Holy Spirit to lead me to think about it?

"DISCOURAGING THOUGHTS.

"The hardness of my heart seems so great, and I sometimes have so *very* little love to my Saviour, it seems as though that heart cannot have been renewed.

"The fear that I do right, *more* from a fear of grieving the Holy Spirit, than from a fervent love to God and Jesus Christ, or a desire to glorify them.

"I am afraid that I think too much of my Saviour as indifferent about me."

The next paper seems to be filled with thoughts mostly under one head.

"DISCOURAGING THOUGHTS.

"I am sometimes afraid that I have not really as much reason to hope that I am a Christian now, as I had some time ago; but perhaps it is my own desponding feelings which lead me to think so.

"Sometimes, it seems to me as if my sins were still darling to me; as if I did not want to be freed from them; and as if I asked to be freed from them only because I know it is my duty.

"I think that I look upon my conduct before I became awakened, with pleasure; but then I think it is only because I want to find evidences of a change of heart.

"This passage of Scripture, I think, sometimes troubles me: 'For I say unto you, that unto every one that hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him;' or some passage of Scripture similar to it, although I do not know as it applies to my case.

"The tempter sometimes puts such a thought as this into my mind, 'May not religion be false?'—but I hope that I try to struggle against all such thoughts.

"I am afraid I do not love my Saviour as much as I do my mother; and sometimes I feel so wicked, that I do not wish to love him.

"I am afraid I do what I think is right, from a fear of tempting the Holy Spirit to depart from me entirely, or from other motives than a desire for the glory of God.

"I think I used to feel more confidence in approaching God than my Saviour, but I

do not know as I have that feeling so much now.

"I am afraid that I love to read other books better than the Bible.

"I fear, sometimes, that I felt disappointed when I experienced, as I have since hoped, peace and joy in believing, that perhaps I did not experience as much joy as I expected."

These brief and fragmentary statements of the workings of Ellen's heart, would afford us material for copious reflections. Who is not struck with this faithfulness in dealing with herself? How carefully she weighed every point that had any bearing upon her spiritual condition! How consonant is all that we have read, with that perfect honesty and transparency of character which we see in all her short life! Her story most clearly reveals the workings of the Holy Spirit upon a heart that did not reject nor resist it, but in all humility submitted to its closest searchings; and while she had never studied the deep subtleties of metaphysics, she *had* learn-

ed to search her emotions and motives, and to watch the whole operations of her mind. For one of these later 'thoughts,' she expresses the fear that she loves to dwell on her character, before she became awakened to a sense of the importance of religion. It is not perhaps strange that the *fact* should be so, because it tends to gratify our natural pride. The Pharisee, who thanked God that he was not as other men, expressed the natural operation of the human heart; but the difference between him and Ellen was, that she had *detected* this unregenerate emotion. She was not only conscious of the feeling of self-gratulation, but she had classified it among the corrupt affections of our nature. The good Bishop Beveridge once said, that even his prayers had need to be forgiven, and his very tears needed working over again. Thus, in many of Ellen's recorded experiences, we observe the same complicate and profound searchings into the innermost recesses of her heart, which characterized that distinguished servant of God.

Take another instance, where she alludes

to that love for her mother, which we have before noticed she exercised to a remarkable degree. It immediately comes up in her mind, and she tries her love to her Saviour by that high standard. She has summoned her own deepest affection for the most beloved of earth, and been willing to abide the test. It might have troubled older heads and more experienced Christians than Ellen, to balance the seemingly conflicting claims, and adjust the relative degree of love with which each was to be regarded; but it was not a point on which God would allow one of his own children, the lambs of Christ's flock, long to be in doubt. He had commanded in his word that children should reverence and obey their parents in the Lord, and he had given, through his good providence to Ellen, parents whose delight it was to further her spiritual interests. We need not stop to ask how it would have been with her under adverse circumstances; for God's promise is, "My grace is sufficient for thee." "As thy day is, so shall thy strength be."

To notice but one other extract. Who is

not astonished at her extreme delicacy, with regard to the *motive* that influences her to do what she thinks is right? She fears that there are "other motives than a desire to glorify God." It was not that she would be more beloved by her family and friends; it was not that she might challenge the esteem of the world; it was not that she would be more happy by doing right; nor even the fear of tempting the Holy Spirit to depart from her, that would allowably move her to the performance of her duty. All these might have their weight, and some of them were justly to be regarded, but they were not sufficient. She must do right *because it was right*, and because God should be glorified by the lives of his reasonable, intelligent creatures, depending daily upon his bounty, and owing to him their creation and redemption.

And now, are the readers of this little narrative sensible that they are acting from the high and holy motives that constrained Ellen to give herself to the service of God; or are they living for themselves alone, "without

God in the world?" How would each heart be affected, that should apply those searching tests? and how many of our readers are willing to examine themselves, and pray in the words of the Psalmist, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts?" Should a course of faithful self-examination be pursued, similar to that which was marked out for herself by this child, there would be less room for the excuse that religion was a matter of doubtful evidence, and that our own need of it was too questionable to induce an effort for its acquirement.

While all this was in progress, there were many conversations which cannot here be detailed. She expressed her mind with the utmost readiness, except as deep feeling would at times hinder her utterance. Her eyes were often bathed in tears, and sometimes she would come from her room in agony of mind, as she read some fearful warning in the Bible, which she thought might apply to her. She once came to her father in the greatest distress, and with streaming eyes,

and pointed to the passage in the 10th of Hebrews, 26th and 27th verses: "For if we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries." She was somewhat comforted with the assurance that this could hardly apply to the case of a child, who now in the morning of life was trying to turn to the Saviour, and give her heart to him; but her father, perceiving from her manner, that her doubts and alarm were not wholly removed, took the Bible from her hands, and read to her the context, with such observations as were calculated to show her that the passage referred to a renunciation of Christianity in favour of Judaism, rather than to a little penitent girl mourning over sins of which she was painfully conscious. But still her expressive eyes betrayed uneasiness and anxiety. She said that she had never met with this passage before, or if she had, she had read it carelessly, and without any impression, but that

now she must be satisfied in regard to its meaning. Her father reminded her that she had in the house Scott's Commentary, which her friend and namesake, Mrs. May, had given her, and that that excellent work should be consulted. The appropriate volume was instantly procured, and Scott's note on Heb. x. 26, 27, was carefully read; and it was with infinite relief that Ellen learned from his exposition, that the Apostle had reference to the sin of wilful and deliberate apostacy from the true faith, and not to the sin of a baptized and penitent believer. It may be well, for the benefit of other fearful and trembling children of God who may read this narrative, and who may have experienced something of the spiritual trouble which afflicted Ellen, to make a brief extract from Scott's note, since all may not have a copy of his Commentary at hand. He remarks:

"The Hebrews would be strongly tempted to apostacy, not only by the virulence of their persecuting countrymen, but their own

undue attachment to the legal sacrifices. So long as they supposed that the blood of bulls, lambs, or goats 'could take away sin,' they would hope for pardon and salvation even in renouncing Christianity, and so escaping persecution; and thus they might be induced to 'sin wilfully, after they had received the knowledge of the truth.' The whole argument shows that the Apostle principally intended a wilful, deliberate, and pertinacious apostacy; not the effect of ignorance or sudden surprise; but against the convictions of their own consciences, and in a presumptuous and obstinate manner: though he expressed himself in such language as might also warn the readers against every kind of wilful, deliberate, and presumptuous sin. The persons spoken of, were such as had 'received the knowledge of the truth,' and were so enlightened in respect of the evidences and doctrines of Christianity, as to make a *credible* and intelligent profession of it, even in the time of the Apostles. When this had *preceded* a wilful renunciation of Christianity to return to Judaism, either

from a determined purpose of escaping persecution, or from proud and carnal enmity to the humiliating and spiritual truths of the gospel, would be generally fatal. In respect of such apostates, 'there remained no more sacrifice for sin.' "

That great religious work had now taken deep hold of Ellen's heart. She could hardly be interested in any other subject. She attended to her duties at home and at school, because they *were duties*, and she was most conscientious in their discharge; while it was evident that her heart was not in them, but was strongly exercised by something else. Much of her leisure time she spent in private. Her closet witnessed the frequency and the fervency of her prayers. She seemed hardly to desire her ordinary food, and for a time it was feared that if she did not meet with early relief, reason must wander from her throne. This season of distress, however, was not of long continuance. Her heavenly Father, in whom she trusted with such filial confidence, did give her a comfortable "freedom from

doubt in his own good time," according to her earnest prayer; and the Spirit administered its consolations after the great adversary had sufficiently tried her. She began now to hope somewhat, though with trembling, and to set about the performance of her religious duties.

The following is an extract from a letter written to Judge Woodward by Dr. May, the former Rector of St. Stephen's, at whose hands it will be remembered Ellen received baptism, and after whose excellent lady she had been named. It would naturally be a source of high gratification to them to hear of that child's progress in the divine life. The letter is dated

"July 3d, 1849.

"When I read what you wrote of your daughter Ellen, my heart overflowed. God be gracious to the child! Yea, let his name be praised for the grace already given. We join our hearts to yours and Mrs. W.'s in thanks to his name. The Lord forbid we should cease to pray for her. I know the

Master whom she is to serve is most gracious. His yoke is easy and his burden is light. Satan and a heart of unbelief may at times say otherwise. Sometimes the heavenly walk may seem to be up hill. But he that endureth to the end shall be saved. 'My grace is sufficient for thee,' is our Saviour's gracious assurance. The word of God and prayer are the mighty means. Let her learn that word, let it dwell in her heart, and then let her keep faithfully to the closet, and commune with her God and Saviour in secret, and all good things shall be given her abundantly. Though the journey through the wilderness may seem long and wearisome, God goes with his people and feeds them with manna, and then the promised land lies beyond. Be thou faithful unto death is our Saviour's language, and I will give thee a crown of life. Say to Ellen we loved her before for her parent's sake and for her own sake; now we love her for the Lord's sake."

Among Ellen's papers the following letter was found, which, it is supposed, she wrote

in answer to so much of the above as referred to her, but which she never sent. It is like most of the papers which she has left, without a date.

"Perhaps you may be surprised at my writing to you, but I want to tell you that I am very much obliged to you for what you wrote to me in your letter, and I hope I shall try to profit by it. I have often thought that I would like to have you write something to me about religion, and I would be very happy to receive a letter from you if convenient. I know that religion is everything, that without it we cannot be really happy, and that with it we are happy. I have very many unbelieving thoughts, such as that Christ does not love me, that I have sinned beyond mercy, &c. I often feel that I have not true penitence for my sin, but I trust that I will not be deceived in regard to that great question. I need counsel and advice, and would like to have you counsel and advise me. Please to give a great deal of love to Mrs. May for me, and tell her that I shall ever remember her with deep affection."

CHAPTER V.

ELLEN'S PLAN FOR THE SABBATH.

SOME time during the summer Ellen marked out for herself the following:—

"System of spending the Sabbath,—

"If I live.

"If I have time, learn a hymn or a psalm before I go to church.

"Spend the time between church and dinner in trying to think of my heavenly Father and my Saviour.

"After dinner spend half an hour in studying the Bible in some way, either by the question book or my own questions.

"Read half or quarter of an hour in the 'Fountain of Life.'

"Then be alone with my heavenly Father and my Saviour.

"Read over hymns, and perhaps learn some.
"Try to teach the children something.
"Go alone and pray.
"Try to talk about my soul with somebody."

The words "if I live," seem to have been added at the head of this list after the rest had been written, as indicated by their position in the page. Though always in the enjoyment of good general health, and never visited with any alarming illness, the idea seemed often to come into her thoughtful mind, that she might not live long, and we have good assurance that she was preparing for the summons at any moment.

It will be noticed that she refers in this list to her own questions, by which she was accustomed to study the Bible, and we have already had a specimen of them, which gives us an insight into the manner in which she studied the sacred volume.

In addition to her strictly biblical studies, she devoted much time to religious reading. When this "system" was made out, she was

reading "The Fountain of Life," an excellent work by Flavel. There is another copy of her plan, where the "Obligation of the World to the Bible," is mentioned. She was also much interested in that truly valuable book of Abbott's, "The Young Christian," and from this she derived very essential benefit, as we shall afterwards have occasion to notice. She was familiar with "Doddridge's Rise and Progress," and many other books of a similar character, which it is not needful to specify. It was quite observable, that she never manifested a taste for works of fiction, and she could hardly understand how any one could be interested in them. If the children brought home a book from the Sunday school library, or any of the family were reading a narrative, her first question would be "Is it true?" If there was any doubt about this, it had no charm for her, and her truth-loving mind would turn from the most fascinating story if it was destitute of this essential element of interest. There are some who can appreciate this feeling when they realize that "truth is more wonderful than fiction," even if they

have not yet loved truth as Ellen did, for its own sake; and happy would it be for all, if they could at the close of life, look back upon no time wasted in worse than profitless reading. She had no regrets of that kind, even in her short life, and she derived a far higher pleasure from her few choice companions which ministered to her spiritual improvement, than that transient, though unsatisfactory enjoyment, which the worldling derives from the exciting romance.

It is surprising also to notice Ellen's industry upon the Sabbath. With her various occupations it could never become a dull or gloomy day. It was not a burden imposed upon her by others, but a plan which she formed for herself, for her own benefit. It proves that the Sabbath can be made a happy day even to children; and if the earthly rest was so pleasantly occupied, we may have full confidence, that she was ready for the heavenly, upon which she so soon and so suddenly entered.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CONFIRMATION.

THE time was now approaching for another confirmation. Nearly a year had elapsed since the last, and it was natural, in view of all those deep feelings by which her heart had been exercised, that Ellen should think of coming forward as a candidate. She had listened with the utmost attention to the course of preparatory sermons which had been preached, and conversed freely about them from Sunday to Sunday with her parents. It was no doubt a time of great trial and of earnest prayer. A decision must now be made in reference to the call, either to go forward or remain where she was. She was called upon in that rite to renew her baptismal vows and take upon herself the obligations. She was called upon to say whether

she would acknowledge Christ openly before the church and the world, and cast in her lot with the Lord's people, or be identified with the opposite class. There was no doubt in the minds of any who knew her, of her qualification for the rite; the only doubt was with herself. Judging so modestly of her own worth, writing so often bitter things against herself, diffident about her own religious state, and often fearing that she was acting with improper motives, it is not to be wondered at that she had some trouble in deciding. She felt the earnest desire and realized it to be a duty; and these at last prevailed over every other consideration, and she went forward.

The confirmation was appointed for Wednesday evening, August 1st, 1849, and took place at an interesting time during the session of the northeastern convocation. Never shall we forget her appearance as she stood that night in the presence of a large congregation, with that small number at the chancel, robed in white, the outward emblem of her own purity and innocence, and received at

the hands of our beloved Bishop, that ancient rite. It was a scene of almost too deep and absorbing interest to be enjoyed, but one which angels would behold in its true light. Many a one can remember even the tones of our spiritual father's voice as he stood over this young disciple and prayed, "Defend, O Lord, *this thy child* with thy heavenly grace; that she may continue thine for ever, and daily increase in thy Holy Spirit more and more, until she come unto thy everlasting kingdom;" and many a one in that crowded church was moved to tears at the sight so seldom witnessed,—a child giving herself to the service of God. It was a scene that can never fade from the memory of her young companions and friends; and it will often recur to her parents and family with solemn satisfaction. The rite had, in her case, the effect which it was intended to have in all. It did *confirm* and *strengthen* her. She felt that she had now taken a decided step. She had identified herself with the people of God. Her position was well defined. That renunciation of the world, its pomps, and vanities;

of the flesh and the devil; that declaration of faith; and that promise of obedience made in her early baptism, she had now renewed in the simple words "I do." She had placed herself anew, and of her own accord, in covenant relation with God, and might thenceforth look for the promised grace. She could truly join in the language of the hymn that was then sung, and sing with the spirit as well as the understanding,—

"'Tis done, the great transaction's done;
Deign, gracious Lord, to make me thine;
Help me through grace to follow on,
Glad to confess thy voice divine.

"Here rest my oft divided heart,
Fixed on thy God, thy Saviour, rest;
Who with the world would grieve to part,
When called on angels' food to feast?

"High Heaven, that heard the solemn vow,
That vow renewed shall daily hear,
Till in life's latest hour I bow,
And bless in death a bond so dear."

Soon after her confirmation she wrote the following account of herself, which was found among her papers.

"August 6th, 1849.

"I do not know exactly whether I am a Christian or not. One reason why I doubt it is, because I have so little, perhaps no anxiety for the souls of others; but at any rate I will try by God's blessing to write a faithful account of myself, my convictions, and feelings. Last summer I had many serious thoughts about my soul. I hope that I earnestly desired, and even longed to be a Christian, but I did not remain, if I recollect rightly, more than two or three days in an anxious and sad state, when one day I was sitting in this very room, and was, I believe, reading in the Bible, when I came to a verse something about believing in Christ, and it seemed as if I could believe, and then I felt more peaceful and happy; but I am afraid that perhaps since, I have felt a little disappointed that I did not have more ecstatic joy. I think the very next day, or soon after, I thought that I had not felt bad long enough. I have not that fervent love, those fervent desires for the glory of God which it seems to me most Christians have. Some weeks back I was

enveloped by dark doubts, and I think ever since have had more or less doubts (at times), of being a true Christian, but I hope that I *am* His for time and eternity. I have lately been reading books upon conversion, and have been much in the habit of retiring for secret reading and prayer. I hope I have enjoyed and do enjoy my Sabbaths, and I have formed a system to be observed on that day in regard to my reading, prayer, &c. I sometimes feel very cold, and have very little faith in my Saviour."

This seems to end somewhat abruptly, as do several other of her similar meditations. She seized upon the passing moment to pen her thoughts as they came freshly into her mind, and was often called off in the midst of the exercise to some other duty; but it is evident that she spent much time in this way, in the profitable work of self-examination.

The same must be said of this as was said of the first letter which she addressed to her pastor, viz., that it is a *remarkable* paper for one of her age. How few are ready to go

into their chambers, and, with pen in hand, deal with their own souls with such undeviating honesty! If there was a single dark doubt, it must be brought into the open daylight. If there was a lingering defect in her experience, or a failure in any duty, it must be rectified. While, on the other hand, if there was a single hope or ground of confidence, it must be closely examined and never allowed *more* than its rightful influence; too often *less*, far less than justice required.

But we have other papers to examine.

"MEDITATION WRITTEN MONDAY AFTERNOON.

"Last summer, I was awakened, I think in the month of August, and felt very badly two or three days, and found one day what was peace and joy in believing. But what have been my feelings since that time? I think I went on for a time comfortably, but oh how have doubts agitated me! I am a poor miserable hard-hearted sinner. 'O how dark and vain and wild' is my heart! I am afraid I have too much *self*-dependence. But oh help me to rely entirely on Christ for sal-

vation! I *know* that there is no other way to be saved than relying on Christ, and by having faith in him; and oh I must persevere in seeking till I find."

We shall often be led to notice the emphatic manner in which she wrote. She indicated the deep feeling of her heart by the frequent use of *italics;* and wherever this is observed in her writings it is her own.

Sometimes her meditations would be expressed still more strictly in the form of a prayer, like the two following:

"I am a poor sinner in the sight of God, guilty of innumerable offences, of omission as well as commission. I have lived a life of indifference, or at least once did, and now have not that anxiety, *intense* anxiety which the consideration of the things of religion ought to produce. I do not, I am afraid, feel sin as much of a burden as I know I ought to; but oh, heavenly Father, don't let me ever feel rebellious against thee, but oh help me to love holiness because thou lovest

it; and to hate sin because thou hatest it! O make me not so much to desire deliverance from the consequences as from the power of sin, for Jesus Christ's sake! Amen."

"I have lived all my life in secret if not open rebellion against God. I have despised the offers of mercy. This hard and wicked heart is constantly rebelling against all that is good. What sin! how much of it is in my heart! When Christ offers me eternal life, I have not come to him with an humble and penitent heart; but have, I am afraid, been conquered by *pride*, instead of conquering it. But O Jesus, have mercy upon me, and help me to be willing to give up anything for the sake of becoming a Christian! Help me to know and to feel that it is my duty as well as my pleasure to love thee and serve thee, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

These various papers, written in that spirit of truthfulness and candour for which Ellen was so remarkable, let us fully into her mind, her most secret thoughts. They are the outward expression of those feelings of which

she was plainly conscious. There was no concealment with her. She did not wish to be considered a Christian, if she were not such. She thought more humbly of herself than others thought of her. There was no show of affected piety; she was truthful in the most trivial things; much more would she strive to be so in the momentously important subject of religion.

CHAPTER VII.

CHRISTIAN EFFORTS.

It will be seen by referring to a previous paper, that she expressed a doubt as to her Christian character, because she had "so little, perhaps no anxiety for the souls of others." But here, as in many other cases, she was too modest to do herself justice. The manner in which to do good to the souls of others would not be so evident to the mind of a child, as to an adult; and yet, when any act or plan of usefulness was *proposed* to her, it could be immediately seen that she was ready to do anything, or to make any sacrifice. She often wished to deny herself articles of luxury in her daily food, that she might devote the money saved thereby to purposes of benevolence. This

was in accordance with a plan proposed by a former pastor, that the children of the Sunday school should earn the money which they contributed for missions, by some labour or self-denial, instead of depending upon their parents immediately for their weekly gift.

Her father once proposed establishing a Sunday school in a neglected neighbourhood not far from their residence, at which her countenance lighted up with joy, and she clapped her hands, as if she had been invited to some party of pleasure, or interesting scene of recreation;—and she would doubtless have entered into it, had her life been spared, with all the zeal of a self-devoted missionary.

But there are more tangible proofs of her interest in the spiritual welfare of others; and her first affectionate efforts were put forth, where it is always so difficult to speak upon the subject of religion,—among the members of her own family. It is known that she wrote to both of her brothers, older than herself, but unfortunately her letters have not been preserved. The following is

a fragment of the first draft of a letter written in pencil to one of them, found among her papers:

"DEAR ——,

"Do you ever think about the things of religion? O let us be Christ's disciples! O how often have we grieved the Holy Spirit! But still I trust there is mercy for us through the blood of Jesus Christ. It is no light thing to hear all the sermons that we do, and have all the means of grace that we have, and yet remain indifferent. And why should we remain indifferent? We each of us have souls to save. Our heavenly Father wants us to remember him *now*, in the days of our youth. I dare say you will laugh at this note, but, ——, religion is a serious thing. Let us pray for ourselves; and may we become true Christians." * * * * *

The following postscript was appended to one of her mother's letters, addressed to another brother.

"Perhaps I have done wrong not to have

written to you for so long, but if I have, you must forgive me. O ——, let us seek for peace with God 'now in the days of our youth.' Let us pray for each other, and let us '*strive* to enter in at the strait gate.' "

She had about this time listened to a sermon from the closing words of this postscript which may somewhat account for her earnestness.

The following letter was written to Miss Butler, who it will be remembered from the introductory note at the commencement of the memoir, perished with her in the waters on that sad morning. It was left by Ellen in Miss B.'s work-basket, and was found there after her death.

"Hillside, Wednesday evening.

"DEAR ANN:

"O do let us think about the things pertaining to our everlasting welfare. What would be more pleasant than for you and I to travel together the path that leads to heaven? I know that I am exceedingly unwor-

thy, but I thought, perhaps it was my duty to write to you on this subject. We know what our duty is. We know it is to repent of our sins before God, to believe in Jesus Christ, to have our entire trust in Him for salvation, and then will follow a life of holy heartfelt obedience. The promise of God is,—and we are told that God cannot lie,—'they that seek me early shall find me.'

"From your affectionate friend,

"ELLEN."

It may be proper here to say a few words with regard to the young lady to whom this note was addressed. Ann Butler became an inmate of Judge Woodward's family in her early childhood, and remained there until the time of her death, with the exception of a few weeks spent at her sister's, after the time of Judge W.'s removal from Wilkesbarre to Hillside, on the opposite bank of the Susquehanna. She was much beloved by all the family for her pleasing manners, her peculiarly sweet temper, and lovely disposition. She was ever found a most valuable assistant

in the care of the children, and grew up to be regarded as a daughter herself, sharing the privileges and companionship of the children of that household. She was some years older than Ellen, and there grew up between them a strong and ardent affection. They lived together like sisters, and as sisters did they love each other. Up to the time of the removal, to which allusion has just been made, Ann was a member of St. Stephen's Sunday school, and was always regarded as an attentive and interesting scholar. She joined very readily in the before-mentioned Sunday afternoon exercise in the Judge's family, and always seemed interested in the subjects then discussed. During the winter previous to the removal of which we have here spoken, she began to manifest a deep anxiety about her soul, while attending the sick-bed of a friend, in whose room prayer meetings were occasionally held by ministers of the Methodist Church; and under the influence of these circumstances, Ann took the preparatory steps towards a union with that church. After returning to Hillside, however, and

falling into the accustomed train of duties, she pursued the matter no further, little being said to her upon the subject of her particular church connexion, from motives of delicacy, and a wish that she should not be over-influenced in her choice, though it would be most natural that the family should wish her to be connected with them in that deeply interesting relation. For the year previous to her death, she had attended church with them as before. She had made no farther progress towards a full profession, and yet, from her constant walk and character, from her interest in the means of grace, which were so freely open to her, and from the feeling at times manifested, we have good hope that her heart was right, and that the summons, sudden as it was, found her ready. Ellen's strong love for her early companion and friend, was seen in that last hour. She rushed forward to rescue the sinking ones, and exerted her utmost strength to relieve them from their threatened destruction. What was said of Saul and Jonathan, may be truly said of them. "*They were lovely and pleasant in*

their lives, and in their death they were not divided." (1 Sam. i. 23.)

The full influence of Ellen's walk and conduct upon her friend cannot here be known, but it was no doubt more than was apparent. The affectionate effort for her soul we have noticed, and we know that it was enforced by a faithful, daily Christian life. O that all young disciples might be as faithful to their dear associates! How strongly would the gospel be felt in families, and schools; in neighbourhoods and communities! The habit, too, would be early acquired, and that habit would be of inestimable worth as the child grew into youth, and youth became blended in man or womanhood, with all its important duties and vast responsibilities. It is from the want of such good and active habits developed by young Christians during their early discipleship, that the church is so sadly suffering; and by a want of which she is robbed of so much of her moral power.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE COMMUNION.

Our narrative now draws near the time when Ellen was about to approach the communion-table and remember her Saviour's parting command to his disciples, "This do in remembrance of me." She felt the duty pressing upon her to participate in that second and only other sacrament which our Lord has enjoined. She did not rush to that table in haste, as if everything had now been done, and the holy feast must be partaken of as a matter of course. Though she had trodden the earlier stages of the Christian walk so carefully, she was yet desirous of leaving nothing undone, no duty unperformed, that would make her more ready for that solemn act. Though she was supposed by her pastor

to be fully prepared, yet she was not urged, and the time when she would come was left mostly for herself to determine. It would seem that the qualifications required for confirmation are as high in every particular as those for full communion; for they are precisely the same as the candidate for adult baptism would be required to have when coming forward to that sacrament. Therefore a person who was prepared for the one would be prepared for the other, for in the rite of confirmation the candidate ratifies and acknowledges all that was previously done by sponsors in the early administration of the sacrament. Still it was thought best in Ellen's case that she should judge for herself, and that she would be more satisfied, and the ordinance would be received with greater benefit, if she came after carefully making up her own mind, as upon a new presentation of the question. And this seemed to be the result.

In her little journal which she was at this time keeping, she makes the following note.

"To-day Mr. Miles talked with me about coming to the communion, but I told him I thought that I had better wait till another time."

This has no date except "Saturday evening," but it must have been about the first of October. The next day we have another, as follows:

"Sunday evening. To-day I did not partake of the communion. I thought perhaps I had better wait till another occasion, which would give me more time to think about it; but perhaps I ought to have partaken to-day."

She first came to the communion on the first Sunday in November, 1849; and we find in her journal the following mention of it:

"Sunday evening. This morning partook for the first time of the holy communion; was not as much affected by it as I ought to have been, but hope it may be blest to my soul."

The next occasion was the first Sunday in December; and we find another brief notice of it:

"Sunday evening. To-day partook of the holy communion, and hope it was and may be blest to my soul."

The last time she received the communion was on that bright Christmas morning, when we entered our freshly wreathed courts to give praise for a Saviour's birth; and before another season of the church on earth, she was enjoying a better communion with the saints in that upper and better temple.

There have been few Christians, probably, who have derived so much benefit from this ordinance, for the few times it was received, as Ellen did; and she enjoyed it all the more, and the benefit resulting from it was the greater, from the manner in which it was approached. It was used as a means of grace, and not as an outward rite, which as a matter of course would constitute her a Christian. It was accompanied with the

most faithful self-examination, with meditation and prayer; and it had the effect, doubtless designed by the divine Saviour himself, in leaving that memorial of his love, viz.: of quickening love in return, operating as a renewal of the Christian profession, and acting *as* a means of grace to strengthen and comfort. It had the effect alluded to in Article XXV., where, in speaking of the sacraments, it is said that by them God "doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him." Certain it is, that she received great comfort, and her Christian character became more definitely settled. She still pursued a rigorous course with regard to herself; but she had taken every outward step required, she had identified herself fully with the church in all its interests, and she was now enjoying in some good measure a reward of peace. We may bless God when we remember her case, that in his wisdom he furnished such means to comfort and strengthen his own children; and we may also see how necessary it is, that all who would wish to enjoy the condition of

his children, either here or in the world to come, should go faithfully forward in the way of duty as Ellen did.

Perhaps, at this stage, our young readers may wish to know more particularly what was Ellen's general appearance as she mingled among her companions. So many have the erroneous impression that religion is a gloomy subject, it may be well to disabuse their minds by referring to our young friend, just as she appeared. We have already spoken of her as having an exceedingly happy disposition: and no one was more universally beloved among her school-mates and companions for those traits that endear the young to each other. There was nothing in the least demure or repulsive in her habits. She acted with the simplicity of a child whose life was happy, because her heart was right. And who can be more really happy than the true Christian, whose daily blessings come from a heavenly Father's hand?

The following note from her father will throw more positive light upon her character and habits:

"She was gay and frolicsome among her young companions, exceedingly fond of fun. Mirthfulness and joy marked all her intercourse in society, insomuch that a superficial observer would not have distinguished her in a group of girls, except perhaps for her liveliness and buoyancy. And yet these things would have been observable: 1st, that her sports and mirthfulness and gaiety were all innocent; 2d, that her strict conscientiousness would appear the instant there was any approach to that which was wrong or questionable. For example: in a walk over the hills with some girls, their path led across a neighbour's grain-field. She hesitated and doubted, though I believe she followed the rest, but afterward made it the subject of anxious inquiry with her mother, and betrayed uneasiness and sorrow on account of the trespass, though the grain being young no damage was done, and the owner living out of the sight of the field had no knowledge and could have none of the fact. Romping with some girls at school, they went into a vacant room, in violation of a general rule

of the seminary. She sought Miss D.'s forgiveness, and recorded the fault in her journal. Last summer she went with a party of young companions to Harvey's Lake. The day was pleasantly spent, and full of adventure. When the party returned, they hastened to recount to the family the events of the day; but it was observed that Ellen, who had come in with the rest, and greeted those who remained at home, was missing. She had retired to her chamber for reading, meditation, and prayer." In the words of her mother: "Thus was it constantly apparent, that though as fond of recreation, particularly the pleasures of the country, as any one, and sometimes carried away by her naturally high spirits, so as to be, as she often called herself, wild;—when the excitement of the occasion was over, her thoughts returned to their accustomed channel, and her religious duties were not neglected."

CHAPTER IX.

ELLEN'S JOURNAL.

ANOTHER incident in the religious life of the subject of this memoir, which shows that she was in earnest in the work upon which she had entered, is the journal which she kept. The Christian name and profession which she had assumed were not enough. She was ready to make use of every means that could assist her in spiritual improvement and growth. In furtherance of this, a diary was commenced, according to the recommendation of a writer from whose book she derived much benefit. Her mother has transcribed the following notes, which we here insert with the accompanying explanation:

"Dear Ellen's simple little diary consists entirely of confessions of her daily sins, with scarce any remark or reflections. She was probably induced to commence it, from having read something on the subject in 'Abbott's Young Christian,' a book of which she was very fond. In a chapter devoted to 'Personal Improvement,' under the head of *correcting faults*, he advises going into minute detail in private prayer; and as a mode of correcting particular faults, to confess them in writing. Her object then, no doubt was, to confess her faults in writing, that she might the more forcibly impress them on her mind, before her final prayer on retiring to rest. This duty of kneeling in private prayer before she retired, she never neglected under any circumstances, not even when young friends were staying with her, whom she knew to be indifferent on the subject of religion, and who must witness this performance of her duty. She was equally punctual on rising in the morning, never suffering the presence of others, nor the hurry of preparation for breakfast, nor severity of weather, to

hinder her from the duty the moment she left her bed.

"There are several scraps of paper on which she had written instances of some particular fault; but the first little book, appears to have been commenced 'August 7th, 1849.' She did not at first write every evening, but at intervals sometimes of two or three days. This work she appears to have continued for a month or more; but there are so few dates by days of the month, as to make it difficult to tell the exact time. She dates by the days of the week, and I should think, after about the first of September, the days are put down successively without any intermission. This diary was kept entirely for her own benefit, without the least idea that any one would ever see it, and probably with the intention of destroying it, after keeping it a time for review, as Mr. Abbott recommends. Indeed she may have destroyed some of the books which were first written, though I rather think not. Of course there are many things relating to family and school affairs which it is not proper that any but her most

intimate friends should read. Indeed I almost feel myself, as though I were doing wrong in thus looking into the recesses of her heart. She was so very candid and confiding, telling me so freely all her faults, that I did not wish to know anything which she felt was entirely between herself and her God. For this reason, though I knew that she was in the habit of writing something every night, I never asked her to tell me what it was, nor did I ever read a word of it until after her death. I will only copy a few things here and there, which may serve to show the low estimation in which she held herself both in the sight of God and man."

"August 7th, 1849. Have felt dull to-day. This afternoon had a season of refreshment. Am entirely too much devoted to self, and live too little to the glory of God.

"Have felt doubtful to-day as to my true religious character, and have doubts almost constantly. Have felt, I am afraid, part of the time a distaste for the pleasures of reli-

gion. Have felt rather better this afternoon, which good feeling I generally obtain by reading and prayer."

"To-day have not felt that earnest longing after holiness of heart, which I know I ought to feel. Have been a little tyrannical. Have had many proud thoughts."

"Have felt about as usual to-day. Have been rather too wild. Have not had much spiritual-mindedness."

"Have felt as usual to-day. Have given way to my wicked temper sometimes. Have been very jealous."

"Saturday evening. To-day have felt some little submission of heart to God. Have not felt so much anxiety about having my sins pardoned."

"I have had much pride and jealousy to-day, and have spoken cross several times, and have been very selfish."

"To-day have felt cold and indifferent comparatively. Because I did a few acts of kindness, felt very proud about it, and did them more from motives of pure selfishness than from love to God."

"Saturday evening. To-day have felt some little submission of heart to God. It seems as if I had no more those longings after being God's child that I once had. I am constantly so cold and indifferent it almost discourages me. Oh, it is no wonder that I should feel so indifferent, when I think how worldly I have been. How often I have done what was wrong. I ought to be filled with shame."

"Sunday evening. I have been trying to review the past week to-day, and find that I have been living far away from God. Have felt my heart a little warmed by the exercises of the day, but am afraid that with to-morrow will return my accustomed indifference."

"To-day have felt no more love than usual. O that God would breathe into my soul more hope, desires, and feelings."

"To-day have been very foolish, have said many proud things, and have been too little like Christ."

"Saturday evening. To-day have felt but little fervour, but to-night ma has been talking with me and tells me, as she has told

me before, that everything does not depend upon the *feelings* in religion, but that we ought to carry religion into everything we do. Spoke rather impatiently to ma and grand-ma to-day.

"To-day have not had that wish to do right, which I should think a *Christian* would have."

"To-day there were exercises in the morning, and I had much pride. This noon the girls were going somewhere on a kind of excursion, and asked me to go with them, but I refused, for which I was very glad, for I found afterwards that ma did not wish me to go. But I ought not to have gone, because I do not think my heavenly Father would approve of it, although they *did* get excused from school."

"This afternoon M. H. gave me (what I considered) quite a compliment, and it made me feel very proud. This afternoon Miss D. reproved me for something, and I answered back, which was very wrong. This morning I forgot all about reading and praying till

school-time, when I tried to perform these duties, but did not succeed very well."

"Have talked a great deal of foolishness to-day, and I am afraid vexed my dear mother."

"Sunday evening. To-day have so squandered my time, that I have not fulfilled the system I laid out for spending Sunday in but one respect, and that is in regard to examining my conduct during the past week, which I tried to do."

"To-night I was afraid to go up stairs to pray, and prayed a little while ago down here."

(It ought to be mentioned here that Ellen was constitutionally timid. She was in the habit of retiring to a room up stairs for prayer immediately after tea. Her own room being on the lowest floor, she would be subject there to more interruptions at that hour.)

"Saturday evening. Spoke rather disrespectfully to ma of some one else, or was going to when she stopped me. Went over to

town to-day, and have had many proud feelings. Was rather afraid to go up stairs to-night to pray, and tried to ease my conscience in putting it off this late, thinking 'Well, I will do it as soon as cousins M. and L. (who are here) are gone,' and thus have not done it as yet when I am going to bed."

"Sunday evening. Have had, I hope, a little more fervency of spirit to-day than usual, though I have not performed my duties with the zeal which I ought to manifest."

"Monday evening. To-day have stayed at home, (ma being sick,) and therefore have not had the same temptations that I have at school."

"Friday evening. Have been too much carried away by high spirits, and consequently have sometimes acted very wildly. Have wasted a great deal of time to-day, and have not had constantly in my mind that the all-seeing eye of God was upon me."

"Sunday evening. Have, I hope, tried to-day to live nearer to God than for some time past. Last night ma and I had a long

conversation, which, I hope, had some good effect upon me."

"Friday evening. This morning perhaps I failed in duty in not asking ma to forgive me for something I did yesterday, but, perhaps it was not worth while."

"It might be remarked here, that poor Ellen's conscientiousness led her often to ask me to forgive her for offences which I was hardly conscious she had committed, and I had often answered her in such a way as to make her think it was foolish to be so particular. Many times she consulted me about asking pardon of her teachers and others, for offences she had committed, which, in many instances I discouraged, fearing that she would annoy them. I wish *now* that I had not done so. Throughout her journal cases are recorded constantly of offences committed at school, which are so interwoven with the names of others, that they cannot well be here inserted. In one or two instances she reproaches herself for not having asked the pardon of her teachers for these offences."

"Friday evening. Had that same fear about going up stairs again to-night, and knelt down here in my bed-room. Just now Cousin M., who is here, came into my room, and while here, asked me if I was writing, and said I ought not to do so in the cold. I was ashamed to tell her *what* I was writing."

"Sunday evening. To-day have spent an idle day. Have not tried to examine my faults during the past week. Did not look over the events of this day till a little before I went to church, and then I am afraid did it rather imperfectly. I have such a great habit of procrastination, putting off till the next moment, what ought to be done *now*.

"I am a very great coward. I am afraid that I have not that confidence in God's protecting power which would give me true courage. To-night I showed cowardice to a great extent, about a very little matter, and was afraid to go up stairs after tea to pray. Have not endeavoured as much as possible to make others happy, but have been selfish."

These extracts are sufficient to show the

character of her journal. There could not be much in the even tenor of her life to give variety or striking incident to such a diary; and yet the true Christian character often shines out the clearest in the most common and every-day events of home and school. This journal she kept to the close of her short life, and the last entry was made the very night before her death.

It may strike some who read this narrative, that these extracts do not show that Ellen felt much confidence in her own Christian character, and that they hardly accord with that comfort and happiness which she is said to have received from a participation in the ordinances, and an effort to walk correctly in the path of duty. But it must be remembered that we are here seeing the worst of her. She is speaking not to us, but laying bare her heart in the presence of that God who was searching it. It was a part of the very design of the exercise to criminate herself. It was not to write about her better feelings, her joys, and her hopes, but to examine herself and truly repent her of her faults. It

has before been remarked that she had faults, and there was no disposition to disguise them. But it must also be apparent that none were more aware of them than herself, and in many instances they were condemned by herself when no one else observed them. She often speaks of her pride, her jealousy, her temper, &c., but she detected them far sooner than others did, and truly deplored them. God's word says, "He that covereth his sin shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." And our Saviour says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;" "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted," and many other words of similar import he addresses to those who are dealing honestly with their own hearts, and trying to cleanse their way by ruling themselves after His holy word. These admissions and confessions are rather, on the contrary, a strong proof of her Christian character and growth in grace; for sensitiveness on account of sin is always a good and healthy indication, showing the operations of God's spirit. We do see that

Ellen was extremely sensitive, while at the same time she was very careful, in view of her many short-comings, how she allowed herself to indulge a hope of her Christian character and condition.

Should every one pursue the same course, and, as in the sight of God, drag to light every hidden sin and pen it down as faithfully, there are few who would escape doubts or fail of seeing still more strongly their need of a Saviour, instead of a reliance upon their own imperfect righteousness. Let any one begin to note his sins of omission or of commission in the light of God's law, and he must soon give up all hope of being saved by anything but faith in Christ. "If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? For there is mercy with thee; therefore shalt thou be feared." It was that mercy through Christ in which Ellen hoped and rejoiced, and under the influence of that hope, after her day of deep spiritual trial had passed, and with the assistance of the various means of grace, she

was becoming an active and happy Christian, ripening, as her friends thought, for usefulness in her sphere of life on earth; but as God saw, preparing for an early translation.

CHAPTER X.

THE SUDDEN CALAMITY.

We now hasten to review the incidents which cluster around the close of Ellen's life.

The day before Christmas, Judge Woodward returned from attending his courts, bringing with him Miss Mary R. Benner, the daughter of a widowed lady of Bellefonte, who had for some time been anticipating the pleasure of a visit to the Judge's family at Hillside. She was a lovely and favourite child, and had been intrusted by her mother to the Judge's care with much confidence. Though somewhat incommoded by the inclemency of the weather, they arrived in safety on Christmas Eve, and were ready on the coming day to engage in the public festal services of the church, and the more

social enjoyments of a family gathering at home. Ellen had been looking forward to the promised visit of her new acquaintance with much delight, and it was a period of great enjoyment to them all. The time was mostly occupied with those happy employments around the hearth-stone, varied by occasional visits to their friends in Wilkesbarre. During this period Ellen might have been observed in her happiest mood, gracing the family circle with all that was lovely, entertaining her new friend and visiter with that ability and modesty for which she was so distinguished, and yet never failing in all this new train of circumstances to keep up the faithful performance of her religious duties. A mind far less disposed towards serious things than Miss Benner's might have felt the pure and gentle influence which was daily exercised. About the middle of January, their plans for the visit were suddenly interrupted by the overflow of the Susquehanna, caused by the ice forming a dam below, by which the flats were submerged, and all communication cut off with Wilkesbarre, except

by means of the skiffs by which persons were ferried across, two quite deep places of water covering the main road. This prevented the family from crossing to attend church. In the ensuing week the river was completely frozen, and the whole flats presented the appearance of a sheet of ice.

On Saturday morning, the 19th of January, Ellen and two younger sisters, together with Miss Benner, Ann Butler, and Mary Elizabeth Totten, (who resided in the immediate neighbourhood,) started out for their recreation, and went upon the ice formed over a little rivulet near the house, running into the river a few rods below. The ice seemed to bear them well, and their father saw them as he passed near them to go over to Wilkesbarre. Ellen greeted him in her usual, happy manner, and, waving her handkerchief with the rest, passed rapidly over to the flats between the house and the river. Their purpose, as expressed, was to go as far as the ice would bear them, in order to see if they could cross the next morning to attend church in Wilkesbarre. Thus coursing on in fancied security

and high enjoyment, suddenly Miss Benner broke through the ice in a place made a little concave by a swale in the land. Miss Butler ran to her assistance, and likewise fell in, when Ellen ran to the rescue of both. At this juncture Miss Totten broke through the ice near by, though in a place not so deep, and was enabled to restrain the younger children from going to their sister, in which act they would probably have lost their own lives without aiding the others. Ellen remained for a few minutes with her head above the water, and urged the others to run for aid, saying that she thought she could hold her place for some time. They first turned towards the house, but soon observed that they were nearer the main road and would be more likely to obtain assistance there. But by the time any aid could be procured, and the bodies extricated and removed to the nearest house, life was extinct. Abundant medical aid was soon at hand, and everything that was possible done to revive them, but in vain. A boy had been despatched to Judge Woodward, who was at his office in Wilkesbarre, and he arrived at

the place where the bodies lay just as all hope had been given up. The lifeless remains were then removed to Hillside, from whence the departed ones had gone out in full life and health an hour or two before. Thus suddenly passed away the spirit of Ellen with her two lovely companions. It was a day of darkness and sorrow which will be long remembered by the living. Death had been busily at work, and many a heart had felt the pang. It was one of those overwhelming events which hinder the utterance of words, and prompt relief through tears. It was but the night before when three lovely girls could be seen seated around a table, full of life and buoyancy, laying their mutual plans for future happiness, arranging their correspondence to prolong the new-made friendship, and on Saturday evening, at the same hour, the same three were laid in an adjoining room in the embrace of death; and at that same table were seated three ladies making their shrouds. Such are the alternations of this mortal life! We "fade away suddenly like the grass. In the morning it is green and groweth up; but in

the evening it is cut down, dried up, and withered." "Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

It is difficult to speak of the intense interest which was manifested throughout the community from the moment the event was known. The ensuing night was an agitated and sleepless one to many a household. Anxious friends were continually arriving to mingle their tears with the afflicted family; and many persons came with curiosity from the whole surrounding country to look upon the face of death.

The body of Miss Benner, was conveyed from Hillside on Sunday morning to arrive as early as possible at that home to which she had expected to return the same week in health and happiness, to greet her widowed mother. But alas, the changes of life! that mother received but the lifeless form of her once beloved daughter! She experienced in that trying hour the consolations of the religion she had professed, which alone could mitigate the severity of the stroke.

Miss Benner had long been connected with

the Sunday school of St. John's Church, Bellefonte. She had been a member of the Bible class instructed by their faithful rector, Rev. G. W. Natt, then absent to regain his health, and she had continued in it under the present minister, up to the time of leaving home with Judge Woodward to make her visit at his house. The full result of that instruction upon which she had attended, we do not know, but it is known that she had expressed the determination to offer herself as a candidate for baptism after her return. She is spoken of in the highest terms by those who had long known her, and it is but justice to her memory to say, that she had endeared herself to her new acquaintances by her amiable character and deportment.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FUNERAL.

THE funeral of Ellen and Ann Butler took place from Hillside on Monday morning, January 21st, and though the roads were still obstructed with ice and water, (after much kind effort had been used by the people of the neighbourhood to clear them,) it was considered the largest funeral that had ever been seen in Wilkesbarre. Many others were prevented from attending by the state of the roads. It was a day of heartfelt mourning among the teachers and scholars of the "Wyoming Seminary" where Ellen attended, and they were present in a body. The last sad offices of the church to which she belonged were said at her grave as her body was committed to the ground, "earth to earth, ashes

to ashes, dust to dust," looking forward with strong faith to her joyful resurrection at the last day. In the services of that church, she had been dedicated to God in early baptism. She had ratified those vows in confirmation, and gone forward to full communion; in her short journey she had been many times refreshed by the Sabbath services of that church, and now by this closing act her mortal remains were hid from view, in a confident hope that her freed spirit was joining a better worship in heaven.

A few days after Ellen's death, the following extract from "The Casket," a manuscript periodical, containing the weekly compositions of the young ladies of the "Wyoming Seminary," was published in the "Farmer and Journal," at Wilkesbarre.

"A formal announcement of the melancholy event which has clad our once gay and joyous paper in the sombre hue of mourning, is foreign from our purpose. Not one of our grief-stricken circle, but feels, already painfully and deeply feels, *Ellen is no more.*

"Peaceful was her young heart, light her gentle footstep, and calm her deep and thoughtful eyes, that seemed to borrow their brightness from a purer source than the far-off sky's deep azure, as she left these halls on Friday evening to meet with us on Monday. Did we meet?—the living and the dead! we met indeed our Ellen, but how changed! The eye, no longer radiant with intelligence and love, slept beneath its pale and blue-veined curtain, whose silken fringe lay heavy on a cheek whence the crimson lifetide had receded to mantle them no more. The bounding pulses slumbered motionless, for their gushing fountain suddenly grew still. Looked we indeed on Ellen? Nay, 'twas but the gem-robbed casket. The jewel that once adorned it—the spirit that we loved, had departed. Bursts from our lips the expression, 'Mysterious, that she passed away so soon!' Oh! would it not have been more mysterious had she lingered longer with us—had one so pure, so lovely, long continued an inhabitant of earth? Who that knew her as we have

known her, so generous, so self-sacrificing, so careful of another's feelings, and above all so careful of doing wrong, so anxious to prepare for eternity, could wonder that her sojourn here was short—that her 'sun at dawn went down.'

"A twelvemonth has not passed since even amid the hurry, confusion, and care preceding the anniversary of our seminary—cares that too often cause devotion's fires to wane in more experienced Christian hearts—Ellen sought and found the peace that is not of earth, 'peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.'

"And shall we murmur now that the wing so early plumed for flight, is calmly folded on a brighter shore? That the fair exotic is so soon reblooming in its native bed? No. Earth hath toil and weariness for the most untiring pinion;—storms, clouds, and darkness for its fairest, loveliest flower. We mourn indeed, our happy circle broken—we miss her joyous face, kind words, and soul of purity. Long, long shall we mourn her, but in resignation to Him, 'who,' in the language

of her favourite song, 'doeth all things well.'

"Then, Ellen, our tears shall fond memories only
Awake from their fountain to flow o'er thy sleep,
Though dark be thy dreamless bed, solemn and lonely,
Heaven's watchers above thee their vigils shall keep.

"Affection, that planted the rose and the willow,
That reareth the marble o'er the mouldering dust,
Shall still make her bosom the slumberer's pillow,
Still garner her treasures—fond Memory's trust.

"Yet not here in the grave think we only of Ellen,
Visions fairer than day-dreams are gathering nigh,
Of a form that we loved, with a golden harp swelling,
'Mid seraphim choir, the glad triumph on high."

On the Sunday following the funeral, the rector of St. Stephen's endeavoured to improve the afflictive event in a sermon addressed to the church and congregation and Sunday school of which Ellen was a member. It may be regarded as not inappropriate to make a few extracts in connexion with her history and the details of the accident.

"Dear hearers, is not the present a time when we almost instinctively turn to the word of God for comfort and support, amid the trials incident to our day? It is not on the distant ocean that death has been busy in his work, and among those attached to us by the ties of common humanity and a kindred capacity for suffering. It is not in some distant city that the heavy and repeated stroke has fallen upon those whose names only are known to us through the public prints. Death's heavily charged arrow has been launched much nearer to us all. This whole community has been overwhelmed in one common sorrow, and an event appalling in its extent and suddenness has shaken those tender sensibilities with no ordinary violence. It has reached far down below the outer surface of human feeling; it has affected the stoutest heart, and caused the least sensitive chord to vibrate. I should in vain attempt to express in words the deep interest which has pervaded this whole population, and which, like the suddenly agitated wave, has been

spreading outward in widely extending circles, as the news of that sad morning flew from heart to heart. It was such a scene as the most indifferent will care not soon to witness; and God grant that the message of warning contained in it may be so impressed upon all the living, that we shall not *need* its repetition for years to come. His providence has spoken loudly to us in this awfully sudden event, and given us a sermon which can hardly be forgotten, on the alternations of this changing life. He has given force to his own word by the manner in which he has spoken to us, and to that same word would that spirit draw us for comfort in the hour of trial. 'We know not what a day may bring forth,' says his word; and how little did our three young friends, who sat together one evening laying their plans for future happy intercourse, know what a day would bring forth to them! Nor did they know what a single hour would bring forth, when on that morning they started out with life, and health, and cheerfulness for their daily recreation.

O how vast a change will one short hour produce! We see the angel of death slowly and silently accomplishing his work in the aged pilgrim, who has long travelled life's weary road, and we are hardly surprised when the last word is spoke and the pulses cease to beat; but here the warm life-blood has been arrested while coursing through the veins. The thought is stopped in the midst of utterance, and the strength is paralysed in its fulness. Youth is no safety, it fails in the midst of its highest loveliness, and buoyant hopes are crushed in the full tide of enjoyment, while on every side the note of wailing suddenly succeeds. Truly 'our life is even as a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away.' 'Man's days are as grass; as a flower of the field so he flourisheth; in the morning it is green and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withered. The wind passeth over it and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more.' Has not all this been painfully apparent in the event which has thrilled the heart of this community?

"But it has come nearer to us. It has made a breach in our church and congregation. It has caused vacant seats in this house. It has filled to overflowing the cup of family sorrow, and caused the tears of friendship and sympathy to flow freely. Out of one house did the angel of death call them; but his message comes to three stricken families. One widowed mother has been looking for the return of a beloved daughter from a visit of much anticipated pleasure. But, with a short warning, she beholds in the embrace of death that daughter's lovely form. An aged father and mother are summoned to the last sad rites of one dear to them; the second child by them committed to the grave within a twelvemonth. And another family is bereaved in both these instances in addition to the loss of their eldest daughter, cut off by the same sad stroke. Is it wonderful that a wide-spread and spontaneous sympathy has been gushing forth towards these bereaved ones, and that every heart, moved by the kindred impulses of our nature, has been

prompt to contribute its share of aid or consolation? In such an hour it is more than becoming, it is an imperative duty that the minister of religion should fulfil his commission by seeking to improve the event to their hearts, which have been so suddenly struck with this near view of death, and that he should point the afflicted ones to the only source of comfort.

"'Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.' O how grateful to the heart, in this sad hour, to have such a source of comfort, and to experience the truth that he does not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men! Where else shall we go to find such assurances as our Saviour gave his disciples? The sparrow might fall to the ground, but it would not be without the hand of God. The lilies of the field did neither toil nor spin, and yet they were clad in a beauty more exquisite than Solomon's. The fowls of heaven, which neither sowed nor reaped, nor gathered into storehouse, were yet the objects of their

Creator's care. Of two little birds, so insignificant in man's estimation that they were only a farthing's worth, not one could fall without his knowledge or permission. Do not these facts from his word and providence unite in speaking to us this day, and gathering strength through this sad occurrence by which they speak, convey a solemn lesson to each heart?

"And what, dear hearers, does this providence say to us? It says, Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man may come. Three weeks ago, this day, our three young friends were in this house for the last time. A fortnight since, while prevented from attending their accustomed place of worship, they sat side by side in another house of God, listening for the last time to the preached word, in a peculiarly solemn and timely sermon.* And, but one

* Extract from the Rev. Mr. Nelson's sermon the Sunday before the sudden calamity.—After speaking of the frailty of life, as apparent from the mechanism of the body, he said:

"In view of these considerations, who does not feel

week yesterday morning, when they started out for their pleasant walk, they had the still

constrained to exclaim, 'I am *fearfully* and wonderfully made!' How irresistible is the conviction that our existence here for a term of years, amidst the innumerable casualties of life, is more a matter of surprise than expectation,—a sort of standing miracle? It is often said that when one goes to sea, there is only a plank between him and death, while the great mass of men seem unconscious that every moment there is but a delicate, gauze-like membrane between them and death; and that a blow, apparently insignificant, may serve to break the golden bowl, and sever the silver cord. 'In the midst of life we are in death.' No age nor rank is exempt from the destroyer.

> "'Leaves have their time to fall,
> And flowers to wither at the north wind's breath,
> And stars to set—but all,
> Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death!'

"Those of this audience, whose prospects of long life are most flattering, may be the first who shall fall in death. The summons may come as sudden and unlooked for as the peal of thunder from the cloudless sky. Though your sun of life may not yet have reached its meridian, or may still be far up in the mid-heavens, and the afternoon of many years be spread out in the distance, yet it may suddenly set, and the shades of death gather around you. In all probability, some of

farther object in view, of seeing whether they could cross the ice on the coming day to attend the services of this place. Members of this congregation, this event speaks to you, and it says: improve your present privileges. Those voices, which were once blended in our services, will be heard no more on earth. The word of exhortation which you hear to-day may be the last. You have had many precious opportunities here; they will not always continue. Year after year has many a one been spared as a fruitless tree; the order may soon go forth, 'Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?' The Holy Spirit has been striving long with many in this house; 'Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone.' Man of business, the providence speaks to you while deeply interested in the pursuit of earthly things, eager to

us who are here to-day, will be called to die suddenly, and in a manner unlooked for, and that, too, before the close of the year upon which we have just entered. How unspeakably important, then, that we be in constant readiness, 'since we know not the day nor the hour when the Son of man cometh.'"

amass that wealth that perishes with the using, and it says, 'What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' Indifferent listener to these solemn truths, the word says: 'Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able.' The door of mercy which stands open to-day will soon be closed, never again to be opened. Young and thoughtless child of pleasure! the Providence speaks to you, for you may be called away in the midst of your frivolity, from the scene of pleasure, to the bar of God. * * * * * *

"And now, my dear young friends of the Sunday school, it is time I turn to you, for you have a particular interest in the event which has filled all our hearts with sadness. It is but a few days since I called your attention to the fact that not a death had occurred in our school during the past year, and asked you then to unite with me in praising God for his sparing mercy. Scarcely have we entered upon the new year before our thanks-

giving has been turned to lamentation, and yet in the midst of our sorrow we can rejoice, because your dear departed friend is happier than before. Is it not a fitting time that I should warn you all to beware of delay, that the world lose not the benefit of your youthful example, and your outward devotion to the cause of Christ. Is there one here halting between two opinions, whether to serve God, or live for the world! O decide now! What thou doest, do quickly. Is there an *almost* Christian here? let him or her become one thing or another this very day. Dear children, should I stand here on another Sabbath morning to speak of some sudden destruction which had laid you in yonder graveyard, what would you wish me to say of you? We must depend upon what you do before death shall accomplish his work. How often have I rehearsed to you the words, 'Remember *now* thy Creator in the days of thy youth.' 'Seek *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness.' And should we not bless God in the midst of our sorrow, that we

can point to one of your own number who was a living exhibition of obedience to these commands, now enjoying the love of Him whom she remembered in the days of her youth, and the full happiness of that kingdom which she early sought?

"Could our dear Ellen break through that cloud of witnesses among which she is now numbered, with what emphasis would she speak to *you*, her former companions, of a Saviour's love! would she regret her early choice, or wish herself for one moment back to the scenes of earth? No! Happy as she was here,—and you saw not one around you whose smile was sweeter, whose step was lighter, whose brow was less clouded by early care; happy as she was, and none seemed happier, she would not exchange with you those glorious pleasures and that harp of gold, though she would welcome you to share her joys. Could she have spoken to you as you bent with tearful eye over her lifeless form, she would have said, 'Weep not for me, for I am happy, but weep for yourselves, and let

the tears of penitence lead you to the Saviour, till you gain his peace.' That Saviour has taken her tender spirit to himself. It will suffer no rude shocks in this world of trial. She will sorrow no more in this vale of tears. Her spiritual harvest had been early ripening, and in God's own good appointed time, he called her away,—it may be from trouble to come. For her we may say, in the triumphant language of the hymn—

"'Go to the grave, in all thy glorious prime,
In full activity of life and power;
A Christian cannot die before his time,
The Lord's appointment is the servant's hour.

"'Go to the grave, for there the Saviour lay
In death's embraces, ere he rose on high,
And all the ransomed by that narrow way
Pass to eternal life beyond the sky.

"'Go to the grave: No! take thy seat above;
Be thy pure spirit present with the Lord:
Where thou for faith and hope hast perfect love,
And open vision for the written word.'"

What more need be said to the youthful readers of this little narrative? They have

followed Ellen from her early childhood, through her various stages of religious interest—her deep awakening, her earnest struggles, her honest decision, her open profession of Christian discipleship in the rite of confirmation, and her participation in the holy communion of the body and blood of Christ, through which she seemed strengthened and refreshed. They have witnessed her faithful walk and conversation as a Christian, and her strict fulfilment of all religious duties. Are not the same duties now pressing upon them? and how many of them have performed these duties? Let me come nearer to you, dear readers, as if you were now before me as my own flock. I urge you to make choice of Ellen's portion, for she hath chosen that good part which shall never be taken from her. Could you have seen her, you would have loved her as all others loved her, and you would have seen that religion was her chief delight, that it made her happy and gave a charm to all her intercourse. She was the faithful child in everything at home,

at the seminary, in the church and the Sunday school, and you have seen something of her industry spread before you in these pages. What she accomplished, you can in a measure, at least, accomplish. You can examine your own hearts. You can read good books, and cease from wasting precious time in frivolous reading, and vain conversation. You can write your thoughts on paper, and spread them out in the presence of God. You can go to the throne of grace in prayer, for God has invited you to come, and your Saviour has taught you the way. The Sunday school is open for your instruction, and the church is ready to receive you and admit you to its solemn ordinances, as soon as you are prepared for them. Are you ready for all this, or are you making any advances to it? And if not, are you ready to meet that death which came so suddenly to Ellen? Like her you may be called away in a moment, without one note of warning, but, like her, would you be prepared? Consider that her life of faithfulness and piety is now speaking to you

through this little volume which you have read, and that her sudden death, which you have just reviewed, is warning you to be ready to meet your God. The Lord, through the means of a simple narrative of a child hardly four years of age, awakened Ellen to new thoughtfulness of serious things, and showed her the possibility of early piety. May the same Lord who makes use in his infinite wisdom of such humble instrumentalities, bless the story of Ellen to your hearts, and lead you also to see that a child of thirteen can be a true and lovely Christian in full communion with the church, in the faithful performance of all the duties of life. If but one such child should thus be led by the Spirit, using this little work as a means, the writer would be much rewarded for his labour.

CHAPTER XII.

ELLEN AS A SCHOLAR.

It has been thought best in a separate chapter to speak of Ellen as a scholar. Of her industry and faithfulness we have already spoken; but when we see what she accomplished in her short life, it is difficult to see when she found the time in which to accomplish it. We have also noticed the fact that she was lively, always ready for play with her young companions, and never refusing to go anywhere, or to do anything, unless hindered by that quick sense of duty. The time which she took for her religious duties, for her reading and prayer, for writing her various meditations, and keeping her journal, was not small, and yet this detracted not from

the hours which were necessarily devoted to the pressing studies of a large school, where some little of the spirit of emulation would be most certainly felt. But it proved in her case, as it has in the case of many an older student, that the mind calmed and prepared by the exercises of devotion for all its tasks, is in the best possible condition to pursue those studies which require close attention; and the happy-hearted Christian, free from those passions that hinder true enjoyment, could engage with all readiness and ease in her innocent recreation.

She was an excellent French scholar, having laid a good foundation for it under a superior teacher in this department, in the Wilkesbarre Academy, Miss Virginia Burke. She was at the time of her death pursuing Latin, and other studies, which will be alluded to in a letter from her teacher, to which we shall hereafter refer. She had made good progress in drawing and painting, many specimens of which are in possession of the family, and without having what might be

considered a decided taste for music, she yet, by her industry and perseverance, made good advances in it. It is a matter of wonder when she found time for all her numerous engagements, for everything was faithfully attended to; and it seemed besides her regular studies, her ornamental work, of which she had bestowed many specimens upon her friends; besides her time devoted to religious reading and similar duties, she always had time to mingle with her companions in innocent enjoyment. It has been well said, "That life is long that answers life's great end;" and judged by this rule, Ellen's life was longer than the average, for every duty was faithfully performed, and the *great* end of life,—a preparation for heaven,—we have reason to believe, was fully accomplished.

In addition to our notice of Ellen's scholarship, we insert a specimen of her ordinary school compositions. They exhibit nothing remarkable, but manifest a clear and thoughtful mind, through an easy flow of language.

"TWILIGHT.

"How sweet this calm hour to the pensive mind. How different from the bright and cheerful morning, but yet how pleasant. How calmly the mind sinks into the musing mood, and rests from the excitement of the busy scenes of day. Twilight is a season for reflection. At this hour we may think over our actions, and form resolutions for the future. It gives a kind of pleasure to see the sun declining in the west, and to see the shades of evening gather over us. I love to see first the evening star, then another and another peep out from the sky. What stillness reigns in the twilight hour. The birds have ceased from singing. The distant murmuring of the brook is heard. The din and bustle of the day have ceased, and everything is still. This holy time ought to remind us of the twilight of life, when its lamp will have nearly ceased to burn, and old age will have come upon us. When musing at this hour we often think of distant friends separated from us perhaps by the vast ocean, who may

at the very same moment be thinking of what we are doing, and as we gaze upon the evening star, or the rising moon, how pleasant to think that they, perhaps, are looking at the same objects. A very dear friend* once told me that he had often thought, in looking at the moon, of the fact that it was the same moon that had shone on Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, and on every generation from that time to this. If we have a dear parent far away from us, how pleasant is it to think of that parent as we sit musing in the twilight. In summer this is a delightful hour. The days are then long, and there is some time between daylight and dark. In the family circle twilight is a time in which to talk over the events of the day, and such exercises seem suited to this time.

"Saturday, May 12th, 1849."

The following is very characteristic.

"EMPLOYMENT OF TIME.

"It has been well said by a celebrated

* She here refers to her father.

author that many persons lose two or three hours every day, for want of employing odd minutes. Pleasure and business occupy so large a portion of our time, that we ought industriously to take advantage of every opportunity we have, for serious and instructive study. If we would spend all our spare minutes in this manner, we would gain a great many advantages even in one year. When we consider how much time we have already wasted, and how profitably it might have been employed, we are frightened to think how much of our short existence is gone, never to return. The best amends we can make for the lost time is, to employ profitably that which is left us. Time glides swiftly on, and, with our best efforts, we can hardly keep up with it. I am sure that if we would reflect that every moment brings us nearer to death, when time will cease with us, it would lead us to redeem our time, and endeavour to grow every moment wiser and better. Regularity is necessary, if we would make the fullest and best use of our time. It

is one of the talents intrusted to us by our Creator. If we have neither brilliant talents nor wealth, we still have time in which to improve ourselves, and prepare for usefulness in this life."

The following, though of a somewhat different character, may be admirably introduced. It shows an imaginative sprightliness among her mental manifestations, and it is by giving these various characteristics of light and shade that she is truly painted.

"There is a romantic spot situated amongst the lowlands of Wyoming Valley, cool, and green as Calypso's grotto, surrounded by various groves which deepen as they extend into dark, thick woods, which have probably witnessed bloody scenes, and echoed to the war-whoop of the savage Indian. As you approach this fairy bower, you think you are strolling along on a wide extension of meadows, but as you suddenly turn, you observe a fruitful garden lying in silent loveliness,

surrounded on three sides by a hedge of foliage, which hides it completely from view, except on the side which you enter. Near this lovely spot a brook winds its peaceful way amongst trees and flowers, telling many a sad tale of former years. O how I love to ramble around in this paradise, or muse under the shade of some lofty tree encircled by the luxuriant vine, as its graceful drapery nearly conceals the unsightly trunk; and then return from a ramble extended to the deepened shades of moonlight, to wander away in my dreams to still more enchanting spots, the resorts of the muses in their visits to our lower world. And now, is your curiosity excited to know where this wonderful spot is to be found, or whether it is only the creature of my fancy? I assure you that it has a veritable existence, and is no other than my father's *Beet Patch!*"

In speaking of Ellen's connexion with Wyoming Seminary, it may be well to remark, that she was always ready to perform the various duties devolving upon her, either in the way of ordinary lessons, or in the occa-

sional exhibitions. The last annual exhibition which she attended was during the period of her deep interest in religion, and just before the time appointed for the confirmation. She had often taken a part in these exercises, and was looked to on the approaching occasion, both by her teachers and her classmates, to contribute to the interest of that event. A colloquy had been proposed, which was to be written by the young ladies who took their part in it, and she had been invited to engage in it. The subject was one of much faithful inquiry on her part how far she could participate, in her present state of religious feeling. She opened her mind freely to Miss Deitz, the accomplished teacher in this department, who fully appreciated Ellen's feelings, and assured her that she need not take any part that she could not with perfect freedom. The following plan, which was soon arranged, was accomplished on the day of exhibition, Wednesday, July 18th, 1849. A company of young ladies are seated around a table expressing to each other their mutual

wishes for the future, and painting in the most glowing colours the life they would desire to live. Ellen is the last to express her preference, and we shall gain a correct idea of the whole scene from a reference to her part. It is mostly in her own language, with some additions which were made in preparing the colloquy for the exhibition.

"I am astonished at your wishes, girls! Can you really think that you would be happy in the realization of such dreams? For my part, I cannot see what there is in the possession of power so fascinating, that one would wish to encounter the dangers and snares of royalty, and bear the responsibilities of a queen; not to speak of the low, contemptible ambition of wishing to rule the hearts of vain and fickle men; for who but the vain and weak-minded ever worshipped mere beauty?

"But the acquisition and possession of wealth, this is the sum total of human happiness, the acme of human enjoyment! Helen! I should blush to own that such a sentiment

had place in my heart. Surely, of all the altars on which the human heart was ever laid, the most unworthy is the shrine of Mammon. What holy sympathy, what heaven-born principle is not annihilated at its withering touch!

"As for being a poetess, I see nothing so very enviable in such a lot. True, there might be happiness in awakening intellectual and spiritual joy in other bosoms; in breathing o'er the world pure spiritual incense; yet how sadly true is the sentiment expressed by one of their number, that only

> "'Flowers by careless footsteps crushed,
> Thus their sweets surrender.'

"Nor can I exactly approve of Ruth's choice; though I confess I admire the wild simplicity of the Indian maiden; yet who would willingly forego the blessings of civilized life, its social joys, refinement of taste, intellectual pleasures, and above all, the knowledge gained by revelation of our great and good Creator, and the pure, happy home

which he has made attainable? Who would exchange all these for the ignorance and errors of the child of nature, and his blind worship of the unknown God?

"Though it would be pleasant to travel on a laudable enterprise, if undertaken for the sake of gaining and imparting knowledge, yet to roam over the world merely in search of our own pleasure, without seeking to make others happy, to diminish the sum of human sorrow, or brighten and cheer the earth by acts of kindness, seems a lot too selfish to be sought."

She is here interrupted by a question from some one of the company: "Tell us now your wish, Ellen! what would you be?"

"I would be a simple-hearted cottage girl, reared amid rural shades and the endearments of home. Undazzled by splendour and the pomp and pride of passion, I would inhabit a quiet home, where the loved and loving dwell. I would wish a heart uncorrupted and pure, overflowing with warm and generous affection, the home of every tender

and gentle emotion; a heart that would fill with joy when those I loved were happy, and heave with sorrow when their souls were sad. I would wish to be the dutiful and affectionate child, the loving sister, and the faithful friend. I would wish, with a generous, happy spirit, to use the means kind Providence may bestow upon me, for the relief of the needy and distressed, and the promotion of piety and peace. Above all, I would wish to possess an humble heart, and a contented mind."

This was the truthful expression of Ellen's own heart. It was felt to be such by all who knew her. The writer well remembers the scene, as he watched this lamb of his flock fulfilling the different duties of a public exhibition, from which her own modesty would have shrunk, had it not been *duty*. But this was not the end. In accordance with the plan at this stage, a gipsey fortune-teller appears among them, and asks them in turn if they desire to know their future history. They each assent, and their fortune is declared, until Ellen is appealed to. She imme-

diately objects, from her conscientious aversion to the custom, and yet the fortune-teller, as she departs, utters the following lines, which seem, from the circumstances which have since transpired, to wear an almost prophetic aspect:

"In thy future lot I know
There is happiness portrayed;
For the quiet on thy brow,
And the blue eye's deepened shade,
Say no dark, wild passions move
Thy pure spirit's gentle love.

"Vain ambition haunts thee not
With his fleeting shadow—Fame;
And thou seek'st not fortune's lot,
Wealth's bright treasure, grandeur's name:
Dearer far to thee a home
Where these phantoms never come.

"And thou wilt not roam afar
For the bliss thy sisters crave;
For thou know'st true bliss a star,
Beaming but beyond the grave;
That mere earth-born pleasures are
But the meteor's fitful glare.

"Round thy cottage home shall twine
Every dear domestic joy,

And the home-born pleasures thine,
Time and change shall not destroy.
And thy pleasant journey run,
Thou wilt pass from earth away,
But, as sinks the summer's sun,
To a brighter, fresher day."

This is a beautiful tribute to that honesty and truthfulness to which we have so often adverted, and it is valuable as coming from her young companions, showing that they appreciated her character. She was always a favourite with them, and they were ever ready to accord her her true place. She thus appears always the same. Her consistent Christian character shone out among all the exercises of school as well as at home, and now she has passed away, we love to dwell upon incidents, simple even as the present, which throw light upon her character. This exhibition was held in a grove near the seminary, and at the close of the exercises for the day Judge Woodward delivered the annual address.

CHAPTER XIII.

LETTERS OF CONDOLENCE.

We can only select a few from among the many letters of condolence which flowed in from every quarter, and such as have more particular reference to Ellen's character or scholarship. The following is from the Rev. R. Nelson, the Principal of the "Wyoming Seminary," Kingston.

"My dear Mr. and Mrs. Woodward:—

"While your hearts are wrung with anguish by the mournful calamity which has befallen your household, removing from among the living, by a single blow, three lovely girls, you are not left to suffer alone in your painful bereavement. The large circle of your

friends, yea the entire community, are in deepest sympathy with you, and eager to contribute their utmost to assuage your bitter grief, and alleviate the crushing weight of sorrow which now rests so heavily upon you.

"The death of your own dear ELLEN, who sustained the interesting relation to us of pupil, has filled the hearts of all her teachers with deepest sorrow. For though some of us have been many years engaged in teaching, yet never have we had under our care a pupil, who had become so closely entwined around our hearts. But pardon me for alluding here to my own grief and that of my associate teachers, which ought to be lost sight of in view of the anguish of yourselves and family, who sustained to her a relation so much nearer and dearer.

"How unspeakably valuable to you now are the doctrines and hopes of Christianity! How infinitely superior to the teachings of worldly philosophy! They do not, like the latter, strive to extinguish our natural feelings at the loss of friends, but they soften, increase

and sweeten the sensibilities of the heart, and at the same time, so elevate the mind as to cheer us amidst all our sorrows, and enable us in thought to follow our ascended friends into that Paradise which they have entered.

"The ancients used to say that 'whom the gods love, die young,' and under circumstances like yours, they sought to draw from the sentiment the expressed consolation for their wounded hearts, but to you is given a more full word of promise. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, those, also, who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. And that your loved daughter now sleeps in Jesus, there exists not the shadow of a doubt, for her piety bore every mark of genuineness and consistency.

"While the brothers and sisters of Ellen, with other associates, will love to retain the memory of her good qualities, and ever bear on the tablet of the mind the picture of her life, so eminently characterized by goodness, tenderness, and regard for the feelings of others, and by a conscientious observance of

religious duties, may they, like her, early become the subjects of God's forgiving mercy, and renewing grace; for they cannot but feel themselves most solemnly admonished, 'that in the midst of life, we are in death.'

"To speak in this connexion of the many excellencies of Ellen, may not tend to diminish your sorrow, yet I cannot forbear alluding to some of them, for they are indelibly imprinted on my mind and heart. I express the sentiments of my associate teachers of the seminary as well as of myself, when I assure you that we never had a pupil in whom we have been so deeply interested. There was a gracefulness and dignity in her person, an intelligence and sweetness in the expression of her countenance, a warm affection, a deep sincerity, and a surpassing moral goodness, that have rendered the relation she sustained to us, one of hallowed recollection.

"Her mind as well as mental qualities were of the highest order. She was always eminently conscientious and desirous to do right. If at any time during the exuberance of her

happy feelings and flow of youthful spirits, she chanced to say or do aught that in her estimation had the semblance of wrong, she always embraced the first opportunity to make amends for it, and to beg that it might be overlooked, frequently writing bitter things against herself, when neither her teachers nor any one else had observed in her the least impropriety.

"As a student, I have never known her equal. The preparation of her lessons was always critical and thorough, evincing a maturity of judgment, and a depth of research, which I have never witnessed in a pupil at her age. It seemed constantly to be her desire to learn *well* whatever she undertook to learn; and manifestly, the same thoroughness characterized the prosecution of her early studies, as marked those she pursued while at the Seminary; for in all the elementary branches of a good education she was uncommonly well versed, and, moreover, possessed a fund of general information far beyond her years.

"In mathematics, French, and Latin her recitations were always interesting and gratifying to her teachers. Her translations of Racine, L'Allemagne, and Virgil invariably brought out the sense and beauty of the original, in a manner seldom equalled by older students.

"In music, as well as in drawing and painting, her excellent progress gave great promise of future proficiency in those branches of study. Unlike most young persons, she possessed a remarkable aptitude for all her various studies, and prosecuting them with a uniform pleasure and success, gave proof that she possessed not only a strong but a well-balanced mind.

"Allow me, in conclusion, to assure you of my prayer, and confident trust, that He who has wounded will bind up and soothe your bleeding hearts, granting unto you in your most painful bereavement the rich consolation of his grace.

"Yours, truly, in Christian sympathy,

"R. NELSON.

"Wyoming Seminary, January 22, 1850."

The following was received from the Rev. Dr. Claxton, a former Rector of St. Stephen's Church, whose particularly faithful instructions were much blessed, not only to Ellen, but to the children of the Sunday school generally.

It will be seen that its references are interesting, as substantiating some things which have been previously detailed in the narrative.

"Madison, Indiana, January 30th, 1850.

"My dear Judge and Mrs. Woodward:

"Could I have been with you last week, I do not know that I could have done otherwise than did the three friends of Job, when they sat down by his side, and, by a *silence* far more expressive than words, showed the depth of their sympathy with him in his sorrows. Who but the One Comforter could speak at such a time, so as to soothe the agonized heart? Here in the far-off West, the tidings came upon me as a thunderbolt, and for a time I would not suffer my mind to credit

the report which the telegraph brought us. Even whilst there was the relief of *hoping* that the intelligence was false, I found it hard to restrain at all my feelings; but yesterday's mail brought us the confirmation of my worst fears. My Ellen—surely she was as dear to me as if she had been a brother's child! With almost every pleasant recollection that I have of Wilkes-barrè, your house and your family are associated. There I spent so many of my happiest hours, and from Ellen I was *always* sure of a look and smile, if not of words of welcome.

I see her now as the pure-hearted child that almost ten years ago prattled with me as she sat on my knee. I see her in the Sunday school,—so full of inquiring thoughtfulness and of quick intelligence. I see her in the little Sunday evening circle, as *your* pupil. I think of her as the child of such rare conscientiousness; the truth-loving, *sin-fearing* child: bearing an almost unmistakeable impress of an early work of Divine grace. I think of her as I saw her last, almost three

years ago: still a child, but ripening, as I thought, for womanhood, but, as God thought, for heaven. I think of her as Mrs. C. had been describing her since her return: as so cheerful, so sprightly, so intelligent, so truthful, so loving, so worthy of love: and, best of all, as a child of God, who had taken on herself her baptismal vows, just ready to enter on the full communion of Christ's visible church here. But then what a change! I know not how to think of her in the surprise, the alarm, the terror, the agony of her sudden summons. I *would not* think of her as mortal—save to think of her immortality. The Saviour who loved her and died for her —the Saviour *she* loved—is one *God;* the God of providence as well as of redemption; and without Him, and 'without our Father,' as not a sparrow falls, so no circumstance affecting one of his children can occur. *He* was as near her, as near in his love and his grace in that hour, as though her head had been resting on her mother's breast, and her life had been breathed out in the repose and

quiet of the sick and dying chamber. I would rather think of her as *she is:* as the glass of God's precious promises shows her to the eye of faith, when that eye is not too much dimmed with the tears of natural sorrow: as amongst those virgins 'that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth,' 'that have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;' and that 'walk with Him in white,' for they, through his grace, 'are worthy.' My dear, smitten friends, *thus* see your first-born daughter; and say, is it not well? What has she not escaped, that might have befallen her had her life been much prolonged in what God's spirit calls this '*vale of misery?*' Why should we so grieve when one who had assumed the pilgrim's garb reaches *home*, borne thither speedily by angelic hands, instead of toiling through a long and weary pilgrimage? Why should you hesitate to give back that priceless treasure to Him who had loaned it to you, when his love in bestowing such a gift, with all the comfort you had derived therefrom during

so many years, calls rather for your gratitude?

"I think you *do not* unduly grieve. Flesh and blood, things of time and sense, *earth*, in all its varied stores, have *no balm* for such sorrows as yours. But He that hath torn is He that healeth you. He that hath smitten will, with his own gracious hand, bind up your broken spirits. The afflictions that make the worldling chafe and fret, and, it may be, even curse his God, are the very means that God's spirit employs to bring those who love the Saviour into nearer, sweeter communion with Him. You remember, perhaps, Herbert's lines,—

"'Affliction, then, is ours.
We are the *trees* whom shaking *fastens* more,
While blust'ring winds destroy the wanton bowers,
And ruffle all their curious knots and store.
My God! so temper joy and wo,
That thy bright beams may tame thy bow.'

"I have not spoken of Ann B——, not because I did not love her, but because Ellen

was naturally more dear to me, and much more to you. Oh! how I rejoice to learn that she as well as Ellen had chosen the better part, and was ready for the sudden call. May God comfort her stricken relatives and friends. Remember me most kindly to them all. May their afflictions be abundantly sanctified to them.

"Mrs. Claxton joins me in most sympathizing and affectionate remembrances.

"Yours in a common salvation,

"R. BETHELL CLAXTON."

The following letter was received from Miss Catharine L. Burke, a teacher in St. Mary's Hall, Burlington, New Jersey, formerly a teacher in the academy in Wilkesbarrè.

"St. Mary's Hall, January 29th, 1850.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIENDS:—

"The appalling dispensation under which your hearts are crushed, is too sad, too sudden, too overwhelming, to permit me to ad-

dress you without a feeling of awe and trembling hesitation. To intrude the common-places of condolence upon the bereaved parents of such a child, under such circumstances, seems worse than futile. All that I can attempt is to offer you, in sincere affection, my heartfelt sympathy, and to express my deepest sorrow. Resignation to the decrees of the great Ruler of the universe is our duty; but the ties which he has implanted are holy, and their strength in the hour of trial must be acknowledged. God blessed you, and you were grateful. He has smitten you to the earth, and you must *suffer*. The power of that religion which you have for so many years adorned, is put to a fearful test. But the everlasting arm will bear you up. 'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.' Faith in his mercy can alone sustain you in the first agonies of grief; time alone can alleviate its poignancy.

"The loss of the faithful Ann Butler, who was so incorporated with your family as to claim and possess the affection of a relative,

would have been grievous, and the death of an interesting guest, the daughter of a widowed mother, deeply deplorable; but the sacrifice of the life of your dearest, holiest child, is a calamity too dreadful to realize. On the very threshold of life, surrounded by every blessing that could make existence desirable, before one prospect had been dimmed, or one hope blighted, she has been taken from the 'evil to come,' for evil *must* come to all who continue from youth to age. Her life was brief, but full of happiness, and we almost feel that she was translated, for 'God took her.'

"None know better than myself the priceless value of that jewel which has been snatched from you to adorn a brighter sphere. On her virtues and her gifts I have frequently dwelt to you both. Purity and truth, dignity and spotless innocence, depth of feeling and power of intellect united, form a character 'as beautiful as rare, as rare as beautiful;' and which shone forth in its brightest lustre in that last, dread scene,

when, with a self-possession almost unparalleled, she rose superior to fear and consternation, and, calmly directing her dismayed sisters what to do, sacrificed her own life in the effort to save her friends. What in the records of humanity can surpass this? What brighter, holier manifestation could there be of the concentrated energies, the ennobling virtues of her character? Her life was beautiful,—but its closing scene was refulgent with heroic piety. She has passed away, and the memory of her virtues, while it adds to your profound sorrow, will be a balm to your bleeding hearts.

"Were I to say what I thought her most distinguishing character, I should say *truthfulness*,—truthfulness in everything. She feigned nothing. Reality was in every act, feeling, and thought, and her mind possessed a power of patient investigation, and an earnestness of purpose given but rarely to her sex. She never glanced over a subject and then dismissed it imperfectly comprehended. She listened and looked when re-

ceiving instruction as if her mind was taking in all she heard, and moulding it in its own peculiar form.

"I recollect that on the first day I saw the pupils assembled, my eye rested on Ellen, and I was struck with the depth of her expression, and I formed a high opinion of her character; and from the first hour to the last, during two years' intercourse in the trying relation of teacher and pupil, she was ever the same lovely being.

"Her dislike to praise was remarkable. Her docility, propriety, and accuracy would frequently elicit my warmest approbation, and I felt disposed to caress her, and show my preference; but she would ever avoid it, fearful of hurting the feelings of others. In her class she was perfectly quiet, never spoke until she was appealed to, and then with the utmost modesty, accuracy, and deliberation. No eagerness to show her proficiency or superiority over others would be seen.

"My sister (Miss Virginia Burke) writes the following with regard to your daughter:

'Ellen was so retiring, so unobtrusive in her nature, that few out of her family circle or her intimate playmates can recall anything more than the usual, even tenor of her way. Her character made itself *felt*, and impressed itself upon our minds, we can scarcely say how. Other children are often good, amiable and submissive; but in her you felt that there was something more noble and elevated than usually falls to the lot of humanity. I can remember nothing more vividly than her manner when recalling something that had slipped from her memory. For a few moments she appeared totally absorbed, insensible to all external objects, and her whole countenance indicated the earnest search she was making in the inmost recesses of thought to find what she had lost, and she was invariably successful in bringing it forth, with her usual clearness and correctness.'

"I have extracted this from my sister's letter, that you may know the estimate in which she held the character of your dear lost Ellen. '*Not lost*, but gone before,' where she waits to

welcome you to scenes of happiness that can know no change.

"With my kind regards for the other members of your family, accept for yourselves the warmest sympathy, and unutterable esteem of your friend,

"CATHARINE L. BURKE."

The following lines, written by a young lady of Centre County, Pa., were published in the Episcopal Recorder:—

"Inscribed to the Hon. G. W. Woodward.

"In memory of Ellen M. Woodward, Miss Benner, and Miss Butler, who were drowned together, January 19, 1850, near Wilkes-barrè, Pa.

"'Tis very sad to weep and wake
Beside the severing tie,
To woo in vain the shadows back
That dim the loving eye.
But sadder far, to see the blight
Of undeparted bloom,
That left no track from day to night,
From spring-time to the tomb.

"Thus to this gentle trio came
The angel of the grave,

Quenched with a look the vital flame,
And chilled the purple wave;
And drinking quick the precious breath,
He left his task abroad
To bear th' unfaded wreath to Death,
The spotless gems to God.

"This is the balm to bleeding love
In life's dear purpose crossed;
The shrouded here, are winged above—
The loved, *but not the lost!*
The smile of Heaven had early won
Each heart from earth away,
And death was but the sudden dawn
Of everlasting day.

"Thou, Ellen, in thy childhood bright,
The world but little trod;
Hadst turned from earth's delusive light,
To yield thy heart to God;
An opening flower, that caught the hue
Of Heaven's refulgent dyes,
And, dripping with the morning dew,
Was gathered to the skies.

"'Twere sweet to have thee bloom in time;
But sweeter far to thee
To pour thy fragrance in the shrine
Of immortality.

Where blossoms close not from the night,
Nor dread the storm to come;
The noonday heat, and evening blight
Are far beneath thy home.

"This tale o'er many a soul will hang
In shadows for a day;
But there are hearts from which the pang
Will pass no more away;
Hearts that in after years will beat,
E'en as to-night in pain,
And hear in dreams the coming feet,
That ne'er shall come again.

"God help the mother in her grief,
The father in his wo!
The hand alone can give relief
That measured out the blow.
Thy blessing on each lonely hearth;
And grant the spirits riven,
That loved and severed here on earth,
May meet and love in heaven!

"H. J. M.

"Feb. 11th, 1850."

THE END.

ERRATA.

Page 19, eighth line from top, for "adieu," read "adieus."

Page 57, seventh line from bottom, for "working," read "washing."

Page 103, eighth line from bottom, for "more hope," read "better hopes."

Page 146, seventh line from top, for "admirably," read "appropriately."

Pages 141, 165, 170, 172, for "Miss Virginia or Miss Catharine Burke," read "Miss Virginia or Miss Catharine Brooke."

Page 168, fourth line from bottom, for "united, form," read "united to form."

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